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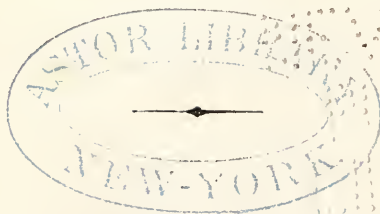
THE
E A R L Y Y E A R S

OF THE LATE

BISHOP HOBART.

BY JOHN McVICKAR, D.D.

‘The boy is father of the man.’—*Wordsworth.*



NEW-YORK:

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P R E F A C E.

THE perusal of the letters and papers of the late BISHOP HOBART, undertaken with a different view, has led to the following narrative. It may be that in the publication of it, the author, or rather the editor, for letters constitute the main portion, has overrated the interest of the reading public in a life already before them,* and a character which, whatever be its excellences, has long been familiar to the members of his own communion, while to those beyond, it can hardly be said to offer such claims as render the biography of public men at all times justifiable.

In the face of all these difficulties the editor has ventured to publish, and can now only

* To the biographies here alluded to, viz., 'A Memorial of Bishop Hobart,' by the Rev. J. F. Schroeder; and the larger 'Memoir' prefixed to his 'Works,' by the Rev. W. Berrian, D. D., the editor would take this opportunity of making his acknowledgments for several facts and statements, the original authorities for which were not in his possession.

state the feelings which have led him to it. When he began the perusal of these early letters, they seemed to him but as boyish effusions, of but little value, and no interest beyond the family circle to which they related ; but as he proceeded in his task, their number and minuteness began to give life to the picture they presented ; one by one the features of character came forth, until by degrees they embodied themselves into a beautiful portraiture of an affectionate and generous youth, full of ardor and native piety, and devoted to every noble and benevolent pursuit.

This is the editor's first apology, since if these impressions be just, such a picture faithfully given cannot be without both interest and value. Virtue and piety want no reflected lustre from a great name ; they are themselves the pure gold, and truth and sincerity the only stamp they need to give them currency.

The inclination thus excited to publish, a further consideration converted into resolution. It was this : Bishop Hobart's character was in one respect greatly misunderstood by those who knew him only in his public course. The

untiring energy with which he devoted himself to official duty, was reputed by many to be personal ambition ; and the unyielding firmness of his opinions as a Churchman, turned into an argument against his vital piety as a Christian. The native humility of his heart, the depth of his devotional feelings, the evangelical tone of his retired piety, were matters either wholly unknown, or else placed to the account of professional duties. Now the correction of such false opinion is a debt due alike to the reputation of Bishop Hobart, and to that of the Church over which he presided ; and in no way, perhaps, can it be more effectually done, than by the exhibition of him in the simplicity and open sincerity of youth ; in days when there were no ambitious ends to gain, or professional proprieties to support, and in which neither fear nor favor can be supposed to have operated, to blind the judgment of those around him as to his real character. If we then find him as a boy, what he afterward was as a man, active, ardent, fearless, and devoted ; fervent in feeling, but wise in action ; bold in duty, but childlike in piety ; yielding in

matters of expediency, but uncompromising in principle; gathering around him wherever he went an attached circle of friends and followers, and using his influence over them to the wisest and best of purposes—that of advancing them in knowledge and virtue, and above all, in that holy faith, which from a child appears to have been his own guide and instructor; and if all this be found, not in the recollections of partial friends, but in original documents which personal affection has preserved, then may we fairly answer all such doubts as to the genuineness of his virtues, by an appeal to the unpretending, but unsuspected narrative of his ‘Early Years.’

With this explanation the work is respectfully submitted.

Columbia College, October 15, 1834.

P R E F A C E

TO

THE SECOND EDITION.

THE rapid sale of Bishop Hobart's 'Early Years,' has caused a call to be made for a Second Edition before a volume of his 'Professional Years' was ready for the press. It is intended, however, that such shall soon follow, the demand for the present little work being to the author sufficient proof that the interest taken by the public in Bishop Hobart's character is not yet exhausted; or rather, that the interest taken in native traits of goodness, such as his exhibits, is a perennial interest that never can be exhausted. Facts we are contented to read but once, for our curiosity is satisfied; whereas the picture of generosity and nobleness, and true-hearted piety, we can read and re-read, and find it ever fresh and new. In this light the author regards his theme, and if he fail to transfer the same feel-

ing to his readers, he believes it will be his fault, not that of his subject. In the meantime the present volume is again put forth, with a few slight alterations in form and additions in matter. Its general scope the author has seen no reason to alter, and no error has been pointed out in the facts. It is again, therefore, addressed to the young as an example of what *may* be done, and to parents as a model of what *should* be done, in education; accompanied with the prayer of one who is himself a father, that it may be blest in its influence on the rising generation.

Columbia College, December 20, 1835.

MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

Until his Entrance into the University in his Thirteenth Year—Birth—
Lineage—Family Circumstances—Schools—Boyish Character.

JOHN HENRY HOBART was born at Philadelphia, September 14th, 1775, being the youngest son of Enoch and Hannah (Pratt) Hobart. The time and place of his birth connect his name with the charter of our Political Independence, and, as well observed by his earliest biographer, (Rev. J. F. Schroeder,) ‘his strong patriotic attachments in after-life, his great fearlessness in the defence of truth, and all the prominent features of his character, mark him a worthy child of the Revolution.’ His ancestry, it may be added, was also of the same strain, fervent in spirit, and ardent in the cause of liberty. The founder of the family in this our western world, was an eminent leader among the Pilgrim fathers of New-England, — Edmund Hobart, of Hingham, county of Norfolk, (England,) who in 1633 quitted his native land, with wife and children, to seek, or rather to found, in the wilderness a more peaceful home

than England then afforded to nonconformists; while the feelings of the unwilling emigrant appear in his bestowing upon his new resting-place the title of his native village; the town of Hingham, Plymouth county, Massachusetts, deriving from him both its name and first settlement. Of colonies thus planted, the success obviously depends upon the good influence of wives as well as husbands; in this respect the town of Hingham was fortunate, such at least is the testimony of Cotton Mather. 'Both he and his wife,' says that simple-hearted narrator, in speaking of Edmund Hobart, 'were eminent for piety, and even from their youth feared God above many, wherein their zeal was more conspicuous by the impiety of the neighborhood.' From this worthy stock thus planted, came forth a great company of preachers. Peter Hobart, his son, was among the eminent men of his age, at least in the new world. Educated in all the learning of his father's land, he quitted the University of Cambridge, (England,) to take Orders in the Established Church, into which he was admitted by the Bishop of Norwich. After a few years, however, political or religious bias threw him into the ranks of dissent; as a Puritan divine, he sought the shores of New-England; and joining his father's settlement at Hingham, became

the pastor of a patriarchal establishment. With these words he begins his journal : ‘ June 8th, 1635. I, with my wife and four children, came safely to New-England, for ever praised be the God of heaven, *my* God and King.’ But this exclusive tone was the language, we may believe, rather of the sect than the individual, since, though he was characterized as ‘ a bold man that would speak his mind,’ yet we are also assured by the same annalist, that ‘ he would admire the grace of God in good men, though they were of sentiments contrary to his ;’ and that when he beheld some pragmatistical in controversies, and furiously set upon having all things carried their way, and yet destitute of the life and power of godliness, he would say, ‘ Some men are all Church and no CHRIST.’ He was noted also as ‘ a morning student, and a great example of temperance,’ while his well studied sermons are said to have been like their author, ‘ bold and independent, and fuller of exhortation than of doctrine.’ Such a man was well suited to build up the new colony on the surest of all foundations ; and in it, according to the custom of those more abiding times of ministerial service, he continued to labor for forty-three years, until called to his reward. — Where he first pitched his tent, there he set up his rest.

Of his eight sons, (for it seems to have been also in this sense a patriarchal race,) six were graduated at Harvard, the newly-founded university of the colony ; where, if they failed to acquire all the learning of their father, they at least inherited his evangelical spirit ; five of the eight becoming Gospel preachers. But his mantle of power seems rather to have fallen upon his grandsons, among whom we find the names of Brainard, the apostolic missionary of the Indians, and the Rev. Noah Hobart, of Connecticut, one who is described as having had in his day ‘few equals for greatness of genius and learning.’ The next generation brings us down to men of our own day ; and in it we find, in addition to the subject of our memoir, the name of the late Hon. John Sloss Hobart, Judge of the District Court in the State of New-York, of whom the tablet raised to his memory by the bar over which he presided, gives this high testimony, — ‘As a man firm, as a citizen zealous, as a judge discriminating, as a Christian sincere.’

But among the numerous descendants of this ‘Abraham’ of our land, in the third generation we find one, who following the creed of his mother, and returning, it may be added, to that of his fathers, attached himself to the Protestant Episcopal Church, established in Philadelphia,

a city which, through his father's early removal, had become the place of his birth. This was Captain Enoch Hobart. His labors in life, though more worldly than those of his immediate predecessors, do not seem, however, to have been wanting in that spirit which alone had sanctified them, the spirit of vital piety,—the patriarchal memory of the venerable Bishop White enabling him to recall ‘the very pew in Christ Church, Philadelphia, where he was an habitual attendant with his wife and children ;’ while a reputation for strict integrity honorably gained and long remembered in the West India islands with which he traded, shows that his religion was one of practice as well as profession. From the labors of the sea he retired in middle life to the enjoyment of domestic peace, and a very moderate competency. He died October 27th, 1776, leaving to his wife the usual inheritance of widowed sorrow, and to his children little beside a father's blessing, and the legacy of a good name. But happily for them their mother was not wanting in the energy requisite to her desolate condition. ‘She fulfilled her duties toward them, as has been well said, with the prudence of a father's judgment, and the tenderness of a mother's love.’* Out of nine children, four had pre-

* ‘Memoir,’ p. 6.

ceded their father to the grave ; five remained, two sons and three daughters, to awaken a mother's solicitude, as well as console her grief.

The youngest of these, an infant of eleven months, who had been baptized in Christ Church at the primitive baptismal age of four weeks, under the name of John Henry, was the subject of the following narrative, and on him, as there naturally rested a double portion of her cares, so also perhaps of her widowed affections. As years advanced, under her pious instructions he was trained to that simple but truest wisdom, which mothers can best teach ; ' from his youth,' it is said, ' he knew the Scriptures by means of the godly counsels which she so faithfully inculcated.'

Of such a picture it is pleasing to anticipate the result, and to learn not only that her labors were blessed in his eminent usefulness, but also that she herself lived to witness the fruit of them ; that she was spared not only to follow him with her prayers in his preparation for the Church, but for five happy years to be herself an attendant upon his ministry — to be herself instructed by lips which she had first taught to utter the words of heavenly wisdom, and to be comforted amid the sorrows of age, by the watchful kindness and the Christian consolations of one, over whose infant head she had

once wept and prayed the tears and prayers of a disconsolate widowed mother. Such is the boon with which Heaven rewards those whom in love it chastens ; and such too, we may add, looking at his future course, is the blessing which a good mother may, in the providence of God, be the means of conferring upon the Christian Church.

Of early indications of talent or character little can be told, because little has been recorded ; but by such as knew Bishop Hobart in after-life, it will readily be conceived that even in earliest childhood he must have been ‘no vulgar boy ;’ warmth of heart which no intercourse with a cold and selfish world could tame or lessen, and that prompt and fearless energy which through life despised all danger in the path of duty, are traits of nature which must have appeared from the cradle, and made him even as a child both lovely and interesting. But whatever were the hopes he inspired, they were confined to a narrow circle, ‘laid up,’ probably, only in the heart of his mother. That they were not, however, wholly unnoticed by others, we have the testimony of one early friend. ‘I have learned,’ says Dr. B.,* ‘from one who knew him in early youth, and who was

* The Rev. F. W. Beasley, D. D.

intimate with his family, that his deportment, conversation, opinions, and habits, were the frequent and favorite theme of their discourse ; and that they often dwelt with delight on those incidents which shadowed out the very character that he finally established.'

His first instruction, after quitting his mother's knee, was in the school of a Mr. Leslie, one who is described as 'a respectable teacher, and held deservedly in esteem.' His acquisitions here were, however, dearly purchased, if, as he himself thought, and often said, was then laid in his constitution, through the strict confinement of the school, and the short time allowed for relaxation and meals, the foundation of that dyspeptic malady under which he always labored, and to which eventually he fell a victim. But this charge may be doubted. The habit of 'bolting his meals,' as he himself termed it, lest he should be too late for recitation, was no doubt very unfavorable to a healthy digestion ; but the blame we may well imagine did not rest altogether on the teacher. The boy who did all things ardently, was not likely to waste much time at the table, even when left to himself ; for his books, it would seem, he devoured as *pertinaciously*, as he did his food *hastily*, and paid but the natural penalty of exchanging *them* too rarely for bat and ball. 'I

have ever felt,' says he in one of his early letters, 'an almost insatiable desire after knowledge.'

A fac-simile is here annexed of the earliest writing found of his, while yet a child.

In his ninth year, (1784,) he came into higher hands. An academy was organized in Philadelphia in that year, under Episcopal influence, with a view to unite, what in education is too often divided, religious instruction to form the character, and intellectual instruction to furnish the mind. To this institution young Hobart was at once removed, coming under the charge, if not immediately, at least shortly after, of the Rev. Dr. Andrews, subsequently Vice-Provost, and eventually Provost of the University in the same city. Here he entered upon classical studies, — 'starting ex limine,' says one of his surviving companions, 'with his Latin Grammar and Accidence.' How strikingly in accord were the characters of teacher and scholar, has been well noticed by Dr. B., and the probable influence of such associations on the susceptible heart of the latter. But it is due to the memory of Dr. Andrews, to give the sketch of the teacher, as struck off by the pen of one* who shared in the

* William Meredith, Esq., of Philadelphia.

benefit of his instructions. ‘Dr. Andrews was known to be one of the ripest classical scholars in the country. He had great skill and experience in teaching, and never spared himself in the performance of duty ; besides, in his very manners and appearance there was that which “bespoke a man” — all that conciliates affection and esteem, and challenges profound respect. He was a Churchman by education and conviction, of exalted piety, and of that loftiness of character which was above the reach of the grovelling or crafty. No man was at a loss to infer his motives or purposes, either from his speech or actions. He was consistent, open, and direct, for he was never of that school of time-serving philosophers with whom policy is of more worth than sincerity and truth. His passions and affections were powerful and ardent, and appeared the more so, as the constitutional temperament of his body was nervous ; but he governed them well, observing the Apostle’s precept, “Be ye angry and sin not.” Malice and vindictiveness were unknown to him, and arrogance was contrary to his nature. In short, a more frank, honorable, and upright man, or a better specimen of a Christian gentleman, has never fallen within the range of my observation. In the early history of the American Church, it is well

known that he was among the most able, sound, and zealous of her sons.'

For four years young Hobart continued to enjoy the combined advantage of such a teacher and such a model, the more operative in both characters, because he was equally loved and admired.

What the scholar was at this time, may be judged from the recollections of the same companion and friend. '*Labor vincit omnia*, was one of Hobart's earliest lessons, and his ruling sentiment. His improvement was marked accordingly. His class-mates were all, I believe, his seniors; but he soon gained and kept, during his whole course, the enviable distinction of being *head* in all their studies. He was often honored by the open approbation of the principal, and his example commended to imitation. The trustees, too, at the stated examinations, were liberal of encomium, and the popular voice of the school echoed their praise.'

The following graphic picture, from the same pencil, however incongruous its associations may be with the idea of a Right Reverend, is yet in excellent keeping with our notions of a fine spirited school-boy. 'Among boys, rank is generally conceded more to bodily than intellectual power. It was less the case in regard to Hobart than usual. There were few

of his years who were not taller or more robust than he ; but he was active, muscular, and well set, and what was more than all these, he was of approved courage ; hence he was looked upon as a combatant to be respected, if not to be feared. Besides, he was ever anxious to have his quarrel just ; and in our little squabbles on the play-ground, and more serious rencontres, we often heard him maintaining its justice by impassioned harangues, which in vehemence might well have suited one of Homer's heroes. The singularity of these exercises, whether they convinced or not, amused us, and often made strife and anger give place to mirth and good-humor. The parley afforded time at least for cooling and diversion from the cause of irritation ; but if the onset were once made, I cannot remember an instance in which our young friend turned his back upon the foe, whether he was destined at last to be crowned victor, or to yield in defeat. There was also a manly robustness of intellect seldom seen in boyhood ; perseverance, which a feeble discerner might term obstinacy ; a high sense of honor, and an independence of spirit and action which humbled itself only before lawful authority. He was valiant as Cesar. He set great value upon reason and justice, and thinking they ever *should* prevail, he always seemed to

believe they *would*, if properly enforced. One instance, and but one is recollected, in which he was the subject of corporal chastisement in the academy. It was inflicted by Mr. E., a tutor, who was an exceeding good scholar, but a most unamiable man. There had been some disorderly conduct, and Hobart was charged as being a party to it. He replied with coolness and respectfulness, 'I had nothing to do with it.' Such was the fact. 'Who made the noise, then ?' inquired the angry tutor. 'I did not,' answered the accused. Punishment followed for his refusal to inculcate others. There was profound silence — he submitted. And I remember the stateliness with which he returned to his place, while a buzz of applause sounded through the room : the triumph was his, while the defeat was E.'s, who was shortly after dismissed. His powers as a declaimer were considered on all hands as very remarkable ; yet in this he would be his own teacher, and have his own way, which was somewhat peculiar. One of his favorite speeches was the popular speech of Cassius on the ambition of Julius Cesar. He had studied it well, and gave it with admirable effect ; but there was one line, in which though never failing to produce ill-timed smiles, and sometimes laughter among the other *dramatis personæ*, he ever

persisted in perpetrating the same ludicrous fault.'

Such a character was one for love as well as praise ; and he seems accordingly to have gained both, equally from companions and teachers. Among the trustees also there was one who watched with peculiar interest over the fatherless boy, the present venerable Bishop White ; who may with peculiar propriety be termed his spiritual parent,—his apostolic hands having successively baptized, confirmed, ordained, and consecrated him ; and last of all, mourned over him as a father mourns over a beloved son.

In this academy his active social spirit soon found materials to work with. He organized while but in his tenth year an association among the boys, under the lofty title of 'A Society for the Advancement of its Members in Useful Literature,' of which Lilliputian club, as but two records remain, the reader may be curious to see them. The first involved a nice question of law ; Mr. W. being called upon for an essay, delivers an argument instead, justifying his non-preparation by the plea that his turn was past, a quorum not appearing at the preceding meeting. The *brief* of this youthful apologist is remitted to his friend Hobart with the following endorsement : 'Mr. W.'s compliments

to Mr. H., and would be obliged to him, if after adding any arguments to the within, he would show it to Mr. B., &c. Thursday, 25th April, 1785.' The other document exhibits the care with which their scanty treasury was guarded ; it consists of a bill against the society for three-quarters of a yard of green baize, used in covering the speaker's desk, together with lock and hinges for the same, amounting in the whole to four shillings and ninepence. This account, after being examined and signed by an auditing committee, as warrant for its accuracy, stands finally endorsed by the president, with an order on the 'treasurer to pay the same out of moneys not otherwise appropriated, belonging to the society.' With so well-guarded a treasury, this society escaped one frequent cause of ruin ; but it could not guard against a more fatal blow, the early removal of its founder to another and higher school, where, however, the association seems to have reappeared under a new though less imposing title.

Among other childish records preserved by a mother's care of this early period, is the following letter, evincing at least two good traits in a school-boy, — love of books, and filial submission.

'According to my promise, I attempt writing to my dear Mamma, knowing that it will give

her pleasure to hear from me. I got to town safe on Friday, at about 4, to my great joy, as the cold was very intense. If my dear mother recollects, I bought some time ago *Elegant Extracts* in prose ; I have, since I came to town, taken out of the library *Elegant Extracts* in verse, and find it abounds with so many pieces proper for speaking, that I cannot avoid asking my dear Mamma's permission to buy it. I cannot get it out of the library again, as it is a book so much sought after, that if I had not gone to the library the first day of its opening, I should not have got it. Even if I could, it would be necessary for me to take it to school, where it would, perhaps, meet with abuse ; and as the *Extracts* which I now have are not so valuable without the other, I hope you will consent to my buying it : Sister Becky can give testimony to its merit.'

Such a coaxing petitioner was not, it seems, easily refused, and his next letter thus commences : 'I have just time to inform my dear Mamma that I am too sensible of her kindness in permitting me to buy "*Elegant Extracts*," ever to exact any thing from her again,' &c.

CHAPTER II.

From his Entrance into the University of Pennsylvania, in his Thirteenth Year, until his Return Home from Princeton College in the Eighteenth Year of his Age—Companions—Philomathean Society—Ciceronian—Impeachment of President—Removal to Princeton—Letters to and from his Mother.

FROM the Episcopal academy he was removed in due course of advance, as already hinted at, to the University of Pennsylvania. The same pre-eminence here also awaited him, for his academic virtues rested on no sandy foundation. Busy he would have been at any rate, because by nature he hated idleness: but that he was busy in good things, was a matter not of nature but of principle; he used well his opportunities of improvement, because he felt that he must render an account of them.

How early such conscientious impressions may become rooted in the mind of a child, it is not easy to say: this at least we know, that religion is the smallest of all seeds, and grows up, men know not how; but still it is easy, as here, to recognise its fruits, and every such instance becomes a valuable record, in order to encourage parents in the same course of watchful Christian guidance. In his fifteenth year, young Hobart gave evidence of his mind being

made up on this point, and made a public profession of his religious faith, being confirmed by Bishop White, 31st March, 1790.

Aided by good talents, and guided by such principles, we are not surprised to learn, that although the youngest in his class, he was yet considered 'one of its best and most promising scholars.' In study laborious, in all his duties faithful, in affections warm, in action prompt, and in speech sincere and earnest, 'he showed forth,' as has been observed by one of his early companions, 'the same ardent and active mind which was so fully developed in subsequent life.' How he appeared to strangers, is well given by one whom chance about this time made a friend. 'I first met with him,' says Mr. R.,* 'in the month of September, 1791, when he was about sixteen years of age. He had a short time before left the University of Pennsylvania, and it was decided by his family, and approved of by himself, that he should finish his collegiate education at Princeton. I then resided in the family of Robert Smith of Philadelphia, who was married to a sister of Mr. Hobart. It was in this family that I became acquainted with him. I have at this time a distinct and lively recollection of

* James Robertson, Esq., of Richmond, Virginia.

our first meeting, and of the general tenor of our conversation during the evening which we spent together ; and before we parted, I formed an attachment to him which I have never ceased to cherish. He was between two and three years younger than I was, and had been, from the usual age, employed in the appropriate studies preparatory to a classical education. On the other hand, mine had been very limited, confined to our own language, and what was usually taught in a common English school. Notwithstanding these differences, however, in our previous occupations and pursuits, and in our views and prospects of after-life, we became friends at once. At the very first interview we felt entire confidence in each other, and entered fully into each other's feelings, wishes, and hopes. He looked forward with pleasure to the many advantages which Princeton then held forth to young men, who would faithfully avail themselves of them, while I, with a strong desire for improvement, was doomed to drudge at an employment always irksome to me, but which necessarily occupied the most of my time and attention. He cheered me, however, and even at that early period of life, pressed upon me, from the weightiest of all considerations, the duty of being reconciled to my situation,—urging, that

while I faithfully discharged the duties which it imposed upon me, and made the best use of the leisure that might be left, I would probably be gaining that kind of information which would contribute as much to my own happiness and to my usefulness in society, as if I were to devote the whole of my time to literary pursuits. I have never forgotten his suggestions ; and if I have not realized the hopes which his animating conversation led me to indulge, my disappointment has not lessened my confidence in the soundness and sincerity of his advice.'

Young Hobart entered the University before he had completed his thirteenth year. Here also an association among the students for the purpose of improving themselves in composition and oratory, quickly appeared under the more learned title of the 'Philomathean Society.' Its rules and regulations have come down to us in his boyish hand, whence we may fairly conjecture that he was its founder. One provision strongly marks his character, viz. the necessity of supervision in the case of all who have responsible duties to perform :—'Sect. 13. A committee of three shall be appointed at the meeting previous to the annual election, to examine in what manner the secretary and treasurer have done their *duty*, and shall make report thereon at the next meeting.' In after-

life he used on all occasions to urge this principle. As a trustee of Columbia College, the question often came up; and to a near friend among its professors, who sometimes thought such a course of supervision argued a want of confidence in them, he would urge this reply: ‘No, Sir, not a want of confidence in you, but in human nature: it is part of a system of duties; — *you* are to see that the students do their duty — *we* are to see that the professors do their duty; and it would be well for the college if there were some who would do the same good office by us, and see that we, the trustees, do ours.’ Nor were the duties of members under this young Mentor to be less strictly enforced than those of their officers, as may appear from the following list of fines:

SECT. 18.	For absence the whole evening, a member shall be fined	-	-	-	12 pence.
	For absence at roll-call,	-	-	-	2 pence.
	For absence till one hour after roll-call,	-	-	-	6 pence.
	For neglecting to bring an essay,	-	-	-	12 pence.
	For neglecting to deliver an oration,	-	-	-	8 pence.
	For not debating,	-	-	-	12 pence.

Beside being subject to domiciliary visits to ascertain the causes of absence.

From no further notice appearing of this society among his juvenile papers, and from the circumstance of another, similar in its design, shortly after calling forth all his ardor, it may be presumed that the 'Philomathean' came to an early end. Whether that fate arose from such over-strictness in enforcing duty, as might well have made the members, Spartan-like, prefer war to peace, for the sake of a little repose ; or from the weight of fines, which as all school-boys know, come very unwillingly out of youthful pockets ; or lastly, from the tedium of the occupation prescribed for the leisure time of the members, viz. that it should be filled up by the president's reading aloud to them 'a portion out of some approved treatise on rhetoric,' it is impossible now to say. Suffice it to add, that to the 'Philomathean' the 'Ciceronean' soon succeeded ; and from a farewell address that has come down to us, made to it by young Hobart in the year 1797, previous to his taking Orders, appears to have enjoyed a more prolonged and vigorous existence. He had probably, by this time, learned wisdom by experience, and made a little more allowance for indolence in its members, and furnished for their leisure moments a more agreeable relaxation than the pages of Quintilian or Blair.

Of this third society also, the 'rules and regulations' appear, by the draft preserved, to have come from his pen. To what cause of offence the following official communication relates, there is no further evidence to explain.

To Mr. John H. Hobart.

Saturday, 12th December, 1789.

SIR,—The president and members of the Ciceronian Society having promised themselves a happiness in having you continue a member of the institution, had their expectation frustrated by the perusal of your polite letter of 28th ultimo. They, while reluctantly accepting your resignation, cannot refrain from informing you, that although your resignation is accepted, they flatter themselves that when the impediments you speak of are removed, you will have it in your power to associate with them. In the mean time, your continuance as an *honorary* member would oblige them, and in some degree perhaps benefit yourself.

Signed by order of the Society,

JAMES D. WESTCOTT, *Pres.*

Attest, JAMES MILNOR, *Sec'ry.*

Whatever were the difficulties here alluded to, it would seem they were soon removed, for we shortly after meet with him an active and influential member of the society, and eventually its head and leader.

Before that event, however, we find him playing an important part in the impeachment

of its president, for high and grave misdemeanors. The articles bear the signature of 'John Henry Hobart,' in such manner as to indicate him as their author. They are as follows, and strongly display, what in life he always manifested, a spirit that rose in rebellion against all tyrannical exercise of power ; the illustration they afford of character must be the apology for their introduction.

' ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT.

WHEREAS, we the subscribers, deem it of the highest importance to the welfare of the Ciceronian Society, that a watchful eye be kept on the conduct of its officers, lest they exceed the bounds of their authority prescribed by the constitution : And whereas, we also think that when they have exceeded such bounds, those measures should be pursued which the constitution directs :

Therefore, we, viewing Aquila M. Bolton, president of this Society, as having usurped authority not delegated to him by the Society, do respectfully offer the following articles of impeachment against him, the said president ; at the same time assuring the Society, that in this proceeding we are actuated entirely by a desire to promote the welfare of the institution.

Article 1. — That the said Aquila M. Bolton has tyrannically obstructed that freedom of debate which is the privilege of every member of this institution, by interrupting the members frequently, and calling them to order when their behavior has not been disorderly.

Article 2. — That the said Aquila M. Bolton has usurped the privilege of speaking repeatedly upon questions pending before the Society, without their leave.

Article 3. — That the said Aquila M. Bolton has refused to put a question, although unanimously called upon by the Society.

Article 4. — That the said Aquila M. Bolton, inconsistent with the character of a good officer, has suffered personal motives to actuate his conduct as president.

Article 5. — That the said Aquila M. Bolton has arbitrarily imposed fines for misbehavior.'

The defence of this youthful Cesar, as drawn up and delivered by himself, has fortunately also escaped the ravages of time, and exhibits a spirit that might well grace a usurper. It opens as follows :

'WHEREAS, I, Aquila M. Bolton, deem it of the highest importance to the welfare of this institution, that the officers of this Society should not be *factiously* divested of those powers granted to them by the constitution, and which are absolutely requisite to preserve that order and regularity in the Society, without which no business can be transacted without confusion : And whereas I also think, that where they have in a peaceful and proper manner exerted their power to the utmost, when such an exertion was necessary, but have *not* exceeded such prescribed bounds, their conduct should not be impeached, but on the contrary applauded : And whereas also, an impeachment has been presented against me as president of this Society, without sufficient grounds to support it — Therefore, it is incumbent

on me to justify myself from the censure of my fellow-members. WHEREFORE, trusting to my innocence, relying on the rectitude of my intentions toward preserving the honor of the Society from the insults of one or two members, and hoping to meet with an impartial hearing, I beg leave to lay before the members of the Society the following answers to the charges exhibited against me in the said impeachment.'

This defence occupies nine folio pages of manuscript, and is marked both by candor and ingenuity. On the subject of the second charge, he says, 'I acknowledge myself guilty of speaking on questions without the leave of the Society; but then I assert I have that right—that all preceding presidents have exercised it—that there is no law forbidding it—and that all the members of the Society united cannot, without the most flagrant injustice, impeach my conduct. In this respect I did not violate, I acted agreeably to the constitution. Whereas, by impeaching me on this article, you who so vote become the transgressors, and violate that constitution you pretend to be so tenacious of protecting.' The charge contained in another article, he thus rebuts: 'Consider in what a perplexed situation I then was, sitting as president, called upon to do the duties of the office, opposed by one who undertook to officiate in my stead. But,

thanks to our excellent constitution, there was a means of silencing this upstart, by the exercise of another power lodged in the breast of the president — I mean that of fining members for disorderly behavior. I had recourse to this expedient. I was not afraid of doing my duty. I expected I should have been supported by you. I fined Mr. Hobart, therefore, for the gross misbehavior of preventing the president from doing that duty, for the not doing of which he is here impeached. I am not sorry I did so ; it is a matter of exultation to me. After thus fining the secretary, he (to his honor be it spoken) informed the Society he would pay his fine. Notwithstanding this declaration, a member, (Mr. M.,) without addressing himself, as is usual, to the president, said, “he moved that the Society do remit Mr. Hobart’s fine.” Upon this a question of remission was called for. This question I *refused* to put. I told the Society that I *could not*, and *would not* put that question. This declaration of mine gave offence. I will justify it. The power of fining is discretionary with the president—I, as president, exerted this power. I fined the secretary as a reprehension for his conduct. I conceived his conduct was reprehensible, and agreeably to the constitution, not contrary to it, I fined him ninepence.’ In answer to the

fourth charge, he justifies himself on the score of wounded gentlemanly feelings. ‘When gentlemen,’ says he, ‘censured the committee who wrote the letter to Mr. Wagner, I, not as president, but as a private member and chairman of that committee, denied the charge. They repeated the censure, when I spoke as president, in precisely these words: ‘The committee denies it.’ Sure any member must be sensible that such a denial was admissible, and certainly, gentlemen, you will admit that because I was president, I was not therefore debarred from defending my conduct as a committee-man. If this should be so judged, what member, possessed of common sense, would accept of the presidentship? I, as an individual, would condemn the office. Since, although charges against such were unfounded, as in the present instance, they would yet appear valid, because uncontradicted.’

He concludes his spirited defence in these indignant words: ‘Upon the whole, gentlemen, you, the members of this Society, are to decide whether I am guilty of misbehavior in the execution of the presidentship, as charged in the impeachment, or whether I am not. Consider well—lay your hand on your heart and decide justly. I ask no lenity—I wish a just decision. I covet nobody’s vote—nay, I

wish none to vote 'not guilty,' without being clearly of opinion that I am innocent. Your suffrages will exist on the journal—they will remain as a *stigma* or an *honor*. To each independent voter on this impeachment, this defence is submitted by their friend and fellow-member,

AQUILA M. BOLTON.'

The minutes of the meeting, 'Thursday, July 28th, 1790,' contain the eventful result of this high trial. 'On motion that the articles of impeachment be taken up, the president left the chair, and Mr. Westcott being placed therein, the articles of impeachment were read, and after defence made, the question taken upon each stood thus: on the first, third, and fifth, guilty; on the second and fourth, not guilty. The sentence was one of disgrace, viz., 'That Aquila M. Bolton, president of the Ciceronian Society, for the offences of which he has now been convicted, be reprimanded by the president *pro tem.*, which was done accordingly.' But the indignity touched too keenly this high-spirited youth, to permit him to remain in office. 'Mr. Bolton,' the minutes go on to say, 'then informed the Society, that in consequence of this condemnation, which he could but think was extremely unjust, and by which he thought all reciprocity

of good offices between the president and members was ended, he conceived he was not bound to continue in an office for which he had now imbibed an aversion, and therefore he peremptorily abdicated the office of president of this Society.'

Now whether this were a case of tyranny successfully resisted, or of a firmness too independent to be popular, cannot at the present day be very clearly arrived at. Montesquieu says, 'Wo to the character of a prince who falls under a successful rebellion.' And here, unquestionably, the secretary has the history in his own hands; yet, even from his enemies' showing, Bolton played well the hero's part, and seems to have had hard measure dealt to him, especially when, at the ensuing meeting, he moved a 'declaration of a bill of rights to be entered on the minutes, immediately after the determination of the impeachment;' a motion which the Society thought proper indefinitely to postpone the consideration of. Whether this individual be living or dead, the editor knows not, nor even whether he grew up to man's estate; most probably not, since he certainly displayed in this youthful contest, talent, that in life could not have been hid, and traits of character that must have made such talent not only respected but feared.

How far the part which young Hobart took in this matter, in which he stood forth as ‘the Hampden’ of their liberties, endeared him to the Society, can only be surmised. It is certain, however, that after a short interval, he became the popular candidate for the highest office, and was accordingly placed in the presidential chair. An extract from the minutes of that date may serve to show, from the subjects selected for debate, that the ‘amor patriæ’ was still burning fiercely in the bosoms of members.

‘Saturday, 2d October, 1790.

‘Society met. Mr. Purnell presented an essay on oratory. Mr. Morgan delivered an oration ‘on the advantage of a strict adherence to truth.’ The Society then proceeded to debate the question, ‘whether Brutus was to be justified in ordering his two sons to be put to death?’ the question being taken, it was determined in the affirmative. The Society then proceeded to the election of president, when upon casting up the votes, it appeared that John Henry Hobart was duly elected. Mr. O. Wilson proposed the following as the subject of debate for the next meeting — (whether suggested by the result of the election is not said) — ‘Was Brutus justifiable in killing Cesar?’

The secretary thus becoming president, we have no more rough minutes to refer to; so that whether the second Brutus received an

equally lenient verdict with his great ancestor, and whether any comparison was drawn between the tyranny of Cesar and that of Bolton, or between Hobart and the 'last of the Romans,' must now be left to conjecture. The whole history, however, marks it to have been one of exciting interest, and shows how the talents of the *man* may be called forth by the discussions of the *boy*.

As young Hobart removed in the course of the following winter to the college at Princeton, where higher duties and a more manly competition awaited him, we hear but little after this of the 'Ciceronian Society.' His resignation of the presidency, which was thus rendered necessary, was at least under more agreeable circumstances than his great predecessor's. The following letter from a fellow-member, is the only further record in relation to its interests.

' *Philadelphia, April 5th, 1791.*

My dear Friend,

I have nothing to plead in excuse for not having answered your last acceptable favor, except the want of a convenient opportunity. My friend, Mr. W. Langdon, will now hand you this. I frequently think of you, my dear fellow, with pleasure, when I consider how advantageously you are employing your time in the pursuit of those studies which will not only be

honorable to yourself, but beneficial to mankind. And I sometimes have the vanity to suppose that you also, in a leisure moment, think of me; and that you will participate in a degree with me in the pleasure I have in informing you, that although the success I meet with in prosecuting my studies cannot equal yours, on account of the difference in our capacities and inclination for study; yet that I make a progress at present much more satisfactory to myself, than in the former part of my reading. I wish, my dear Hobart, you would fix on the profession of the law: I can without flattery say, that I think you admirably calculated for it, both from genius and an apt method of delivering your sentiments, one of the greatest essentials to the advocate. Although I am delighted to hear of your success, yet I wish you may not injure your health by too close a confinement. The vacation, I suppose, will soon commence, which will be a relaxation to your mind, and to which I look forward with pleasure, under a hope that I may once more enjoy your agreeable converse. I have just time (as my friend waits,) to inform you that I am no longer a member of the Ciceronian Society. I found its business to interfere with my studies so much as to oblige me to resign my seat, and request the privileges of an honorary member. Do write soon, and believe me to be, in haste, your sincere friend,

JAMES MILNOR.'

It is worthy of note, that this advocate for the law, himself, in middle age, became the apologist for a holier cause; and that thus these companions in boyhood, widely separated,

met again, after many years, in the relation of bishop and pastor, in a city to which both were then strangers, and in a sacred profession, to which, at that time, the attention of neither was turned. The last notice of the Ciceronian Society appears in a letter of Mr. Hobart in 1794, tendering his resignation as a member, on the ground of his second removal to Princeton, and concluding with these words : ‘ Be assured that my conviction of the improvement to be derived from the Society remains as strong as ever, and that for those members with whom I have a personal acquaintance, I feel that regard which a knowledge of their merit will ever excite.’

After three years spent in a University whose course of study was at that time far from answering its lofty title, he was removed for his further improvement to Princeton, New-Jersey — entering upon the junior, or third year in advance. Princeton College, or more properly Nassau Hall, was then at the height of its popularity, perhaps too of its strength ; for its president was ‘ the learned and able Wither-
spoon,’ its vice-president ‘ the accomplished and eloquent Stanhope Smith.’ Of both these gentlemen young Hobart conciliated the esteem ; with the latter he contracted an intimate and enduring friendship.

Of the two years here spent in academic retirement, records remain more full than generally survive the lapse of so many years : they show this period of his life to have been equally happy and improving. At the end of the first year he thus writes : ‘ Could I have enjoyed the company of my dear relations, no one year of my life, I think I can say, has passed so agreeably, and I hope I may add, with so much benefit. Another will, I trust, pass away with as much pleasure, and as much improvement ; and then my destination in life must be fixed. Whatever that may be, in whatever course of action I may be engaged, I shall strive to merit the esteem of my friends, and above all, the approbation of my conscience, which I think I may say is not as yet stained with any voluntary offences ; and I shall always feel most grateful to my dear relations for the means of improvement which I now enjoy.’ An extract from one of his last letters will serve to show that he was not disappointed in this anticipation. ‘ The time draws near,’ says he, ‘ when I shall leave college ; and though the thought of being again united to my friends, affords me the greatest pleasure, yet the idea of leaving a place where I have spent so many happy hours, of dissolving connections, which next to the ties of nature

are the most dear, cannot but considerably alloy the happiness I hope. I feel, however, that a life of study and retirement is not a life of usefulness, and although my *happiest* days may be past, I look forward with trust that my most *useful* ones are yet to come.'

His own letters, during this period, are necessarily dispersed; but those addressed to him seem to have been all carefully preserved; the recollections, too, of the surviving companions of his studies, though few in number, are yet vivid and sufficiently minute.

The general results are well summed up by his early biographer. 'Habitual cheerfulness, great ardor and success in study, social habits, winning manners, and a peaceful disposition—a well-balanced mind, prompt and able elocution, native talent, persevering industry, and pure morals, compose the wreath of praise awarded to him when on classic ground.* But to give the language of actual recollection, 'He was distinguished,' says Dr. Otto, 'for an unusual gayety of temper, without the least mixture of levity or thoughtlessness. His voice was good, and his ear musical; and he used occasionally, for his own and our amusement, to sing early in the morning before we arose.

* 'Memorial,' p. 20.

His temperament was ardent, and he studied with diligence, both from a love of useful knowledge, and a laudable ambition to be honorably distinguished. The untiring zeal which he displayed so conspicuously in after-life, in the performance of whatever he deemed his duty, was a part of his natural character, and manifested itself at college. His habits were very social, and during those hours which he devoted to recreation, he mixed freely in the company of the most distinguished students, being most intimate, as is usual, with the members of the literary society to which he belonged. But from the great urbanity of his manners, and his high standing, he was much respected by all. I do not recollect that during the whole time we resided together, any incident occurred which suspended for a moment our friendly feelings toward each other. He loved peace and harmony, and zealously exercised his powerful influence in composing the differences that occasionally take place where many youths live together. His strong sense of propriety, and his inflexible justice, gave him great weight on these occasions. There was no one branch of study, as far as my memory serves me, that especially engaged his attention, or to which he showed a decided preference. He was well acquainted with the

whole course prescribed. His mind was vigorous and well balanced, none of the faculties being in an undue proportion.'

Among the anticipations then excited, and now remembered of him, was an observation of Dr. Benjamin Rush, on seeing the light always burning in his room, — 'Ah! that Johnny Hobart will one day be a great man!'

A few extracts from his mother's letters may serve to throw light on her character, as well as the domestic circumstances of the family. The following are taken from a bundle carefully preserved and endorsed by the affectionate child to whom they were addressed. They give the natural picture of the watchful, timid tenderness of a solitary mother. Had we his in return, we should be enabled better to judge how well that tenderness was merited. At the period of his going to Princeton, she was residing, at least temporarily, with her married daughter at Abingdon, (Pennsylvania,) whence she thus writes her son on the subject of his removal:

'I am pleased with your dutiful and affectionate letter; from that and your sister's, the reasons for your desiring to go to Princeton seem so well-founded, and the advantage that it may be to you appears so great, that I cannot refuse my consent. I never doubted the goodness of your own heart—my fears have been, lest

the influence of bad example should overcome your own good resolutions ; but I have so much confidence in you, my dear John, that I shall rely on your assurance for the rectitude of your conduct in every respect. I hope all I shall have to regret will be, that I have not the company of my dear child ; but I find I must be deprived of that too much, whether you go from home or not. I want very much to be with you, my dear son, but still I have a full hope and confidence that your love of goodness, and your love of me, will preserve you from the influence of bad example ; my heart is full of tenderness, but I cannot write what I feel. That Providence may make you his peculiar care, and overrule all your actions, is the earnest prayer of, my dear John, your affectionate mother,

H. HOBART.'

Soon after his establishment, she writes him from Philadelphia as follows :

'I am happy to hear, my dear John, that you got safe to Princeton, and that you are so agreeably situated there ; may you and I never have reason to regret that you went. It is now very inconvenient for your brother to spare the money you write for, but he will send it if he possibly can, as he would rather submit to difficulties himself, than subject you to them. You will remember, my dear, to keep a daily account of your expenses ; you know the necessity there is for frugality, so that I shall not urge you on that subject. It will contribute to your happiness to hear that we do very well without you ; we miss you very much to be sure, but the hope that it will prove best for you that we should be separated for a time, will help us to bear

it with what cheerfulness we can. You may be assured you have the best wishes, and the most tender affections, of yours,

H. HOBART.'

'Philadelphia, December 18th, 1791.

From my dear John's letters of the 7th and 14th instant, I have the pleasure of finding you are well, and continue still satisfied with your situation. I am almost afraid to tell you how much I wish to see you at Christmas, for several reasons. One is, lest your absence from college should interfere with your studies, and be a disadvantage to you on that account. Another is, the probability that the weather will be very cold, and travelling very disagreeable at that time, and my exceeding apprehension of danger in crossing the ferry, which you must do twice if you come and return again; we ought not to wish, my dear John, to gratify our inclinations at the expense of discretion. If you find it will be in any way detrimental to leave your studies, don't do it—if there is any appearance of danger, don't risk it; but in either of these cases submit to prudence. If circumstances should prove favorable I shall be most happy to see you, though I shall be again uneasy that you will have the same risk to run when you return. I enclose you a five dollar note, though I must again remind you of the absolute necessity there is to avoid every unnecessary expense, and of my fears for you in crossing the ferry, which I beg you will not attempt, if the weather should be boisterous, or any appearance of danger from ice, or any other unfavorable circumstance. Should you come as far as the ferry, and find it not quite safe to cross it, do not venture, but wait or return,

rather than risk any danger; if you find it will be advisable and safe for you to come, let me know in time, that I may expect you. And may you ask and receive the blessing and protection of that Providence who alone can preserve us from dangers of every kind. That he may make you his peculiar care, prays your tenderly affectionate parent,

HANNAH HOBART.'

'Philadelphia, 17th January, 1792.

I have received my dear John's welcome letter of the 10th instant. I am always happy to hear from you, but would not wish to purchase that satisfaction at the expense of your studies; whenever you can write without making that sacrifice, you may be sure I shall have pleasure in hearing from you, and will endeavor to make myself easy when you do not. I am perfectly satisfied, my dear John, with the assurances contained in your letter, and would wish you to believe that I have the fullest confidence in the rectitude of your heart, and the propriety of your conduct, and am certain it will be owing to mistake or inattention, if you do not always do right. I would remind you, my dear John, to be careful of your eyes; they are of more value than you can conceive while you are blessed with the enjoyment of them. I am glad to find you are well, and continue pleased with your situation. I have too much confidence in the goodness of your principles, as well as understanding, to imagine you could have pleasure in any situation or engagements that would not afford satisfaction on reflection, as well as in present enjoyment. I need not say how much I wish to see you, and am happy to think it will not be long first. Let

me know how much money you will want, and when. I write in haste, but am ever my dear John's affectionate

H. HOBART.'

' Thursday, 20th September, 1792.

I was sorry I had not a letter ready for you, my dear John, when Mr. Otto called, as it would have been so convenient to have sent it by him; and I have now scarce time more than to inform you, that I enclose a ten dollar note, and to tell you that your letter was exceedingly pleasing to me, as by it I find you have passed your time agreeably, and I have no doubt profitably. Indeed, my dear John, I cannot help anticipating the happiness I expect to experience from your future conduct, as I already have from your past; relying on the rectitude of your heart, and the kindness of that Providence who will, I trust, continue to give you every good disposition, and to bless every laudable endeavor, if you fail not humbly to seek it from him. It is a great satisfaction to me to find your situation is still agreeable to you, and I hope it will continue to be so, as a knowledge of your happiness always contributes to mine. But, my dear John, you do not tell me you are well: I want to know if you have any cough, or have been at any time sick since you left home; if you are, do not keep the knowledge of it from me. I would earnestly beseech you to have a regard to your health. I know your desire to acquire knowledge is great, and it is commendable; but I would wish you to think it of at least as much consequence to preserve health, as to improve your mind, since without health you can do nothing, so that the preservation of that should be your first, though not your only care.

Your brothers and sisters and little nephews are all well and with the hope of seeing you soon, join in much love to you, with, my dear John, your affectionate

H. HOBART.'

A chance letter of the son's has been preserved, which, though without date, seems to be in answer to this : he says,

'Tuesday Evening.

I have been some time waiting to write to you by G. Bullock ; but as his going seems very uncertain, I now write by post, to ease you of the anxiety I fear you feel in not hearing from me. I wish, my dear Mamma, you would not be so apprehensive that I shall injure my health by application ; you may depend upon it, the preservation of that shall always be a primary concern, and that study shall never injure it. As my dear Mamma's concern is an evidence of her affection for her son, so I assure her that son's heart is too full to express as it ought, how much he is indebted to her ; but it would add greatly to my happiness, if I knew you were not oppressed with unnecessary fears. I am not now troubled with a cough, but am as hearty as I have been at any time since I came here. The situation is so healthy, that it is very rarely the students have any complaints.

Your very affectionate son,

J. H. H.'

'Wednesday Evening, January 2, 1793.

I am happy, my dear John, to hear you are well, and am much pleased with the account your sister tells me Mr. Tatem gives of your exhibition on Monday

evening. I have just got your speech from your sister, but must defer reading it till to-morrow. I am so much engaged with your sister Polly, that I can scarce take time to write a line, or I should before now have told you I was highly gratified in hearing that Dr. Smith, when he was last in Philadelphia, spoke of you in terms of the highest commendation, as to your disposition, capacity, and conduct. I hope, my dear son, you will always behave so as to merit (and I doubt it not) the approbation of all whose good opinion you ought to desire to have. I enclose a five dollar note, and assure my dear boy, that so far from feeling reluctance at sending you necessary supplies, I do it with the utmost cheerfulness when in my power, because I have confidence in your prudent disposal of it, and hope the end will be your advantage and improvement. Your brother has given up business in town, and removed to Pottsgrove. I heard this afternoon they were all well.

Your affectionate mother,

H. HOBART.'

If his mother's affection was thus fearful under ordinary circumstances, it may easily be imagined how painful was the separation during the ravages of the yellow fever, which broke out in the summer of this year, (1793.) Her letters were almost daily, and filled with injunctions of care, and caution, and preventive remedies.

On the close of his final examinations in the summer of this fatal year, he had proceeded to

pay a long-promised visit to a dear college friend at Jamaica, Long-Island. While there, the fever broke out with violence in Philadelphia ; and so great was the alarm, that to avoid the danger arising from public travel, his friend himself took him back to Princeton in a private conveyance, and through by-roads.

It was now his turn to be anxious for his mother's safety ; he thus writes from Jamaica :

‘ My dear Mamma’s two letters have filled me with more anxiety than I can express. I am very sure you cannot be safe in the city, and if you are so anxious I should not come there, I wish you would be equally concerned on your own account. I cannot be easy any where, my dear Mamma, till you are out of the city, as long as the disease continues. Oh, my dear Mother, if you knew how anxious I am, I am sure you would not continue in town. I would therefore beg and entreat you to leave the city. I cannot be convinced you are safe there. I should suppose you might go either to Frankfort or to Pottsgrove, but in the city I hope you will not continue. I have felt very much for you to-day, the weather has been unusually warm. I wish, my dear Mamma, you would go into the country. I shall anxiously wait for a letter. With a great deal of love and anxiety, I remain your sincerely affectionate,

J. H. HOBART.

Friday Evening.’

Her removal to Frankfort, which immediately took place, was not, however, sufficient to quiet his fears. His next is as follows :

'Princeton, September 25th, 1793.

I feel daily more and more anxiety for your safety, my dear Mamma, and that of my brother and sisters, who still continue within the reach of this alarming fever. The accounts we have from Philadelphia are extremely distressing, and represent the fever as continuing to rage with the greatest fury, and carrying off daily a great number of the citizens. But what adds to my anxiety and distress is, that you are by no means yet safe from the contagion. Mr. Tennent, one of our trustees, has mentioned here that three or four persons have died of the disorder in the neighborhood of Abingdon, which is farther from the city than Frankfort. I wish very much, if it were possible, that you would all move to Pottsgrove, where you would be more secure from danger. Were you there, I should be much less anxious — I should not be near so much distressed. I have never been more distracted with doubt and anxiety than to-day. I am extremely anxious to be with you, and my dear Robert and his family. Oh how easy I should feel, if you were all out of the reach of danger. Skinner has returned. I do not know that I have ever suffered so much as in parting from him. I knew he was very dear to me, but I did not know how dear till he left me. With heartfelt love and affection for my dear Mamma, I remain her dutiful son,

JOHN H. HOBART.

P. S. We have received degrees privately.'

'Princeton, Sept. 28. Saturday Evening.

My dear Sister,

I wrote to mamma by Wednesday's, Thursday's, and Friday's post. I am in continual anxiety not only

for your safety, but for our relations who still remain in the city. I hope, my dear sister, that you will not venture into town with Mr. Smith, and I wish you could persuade him to leave the business of the bank, when he cannot attend to it but with such imminent hazard. I dare not think of the consequences that may follow his so frequently going into the city. Mamma informs me that she is well; indeed it is my chief consolation. Neglectful as I may be in acknowledging the common mercies of Providence, such a distinguished instance of his goodness in the preservation of those who are most dear to me in this time of danger, awakens in my heart the liveliest gratitude. And while those who lament the loss of friends must take warning from the solemn dispensation, it ought to operate no less forcibly on those who have reason to acknowledge its goodness in not having such loss to lament.

My dear friend Skinner left me on Thursday last, depriving me of my chief source of happiness while absent from you all. I wish it were possible for us to be always together, and I must indulge in the pleasing anticipation that such may be the case. I wish, my dear sister, that you only knew him, and then you would not wonder, as you now may, at the warmth of my attachment to him.

Your affectionate brother,

JOHN H. HOBART.'

At this season of wide-spread alarm, the fears of those separated were mutual. His mother's letter, a few days previous, is as follows :

'Frankfort, 24th September, 1793.

I wrote to you, my dear John, last Thursday ; since then, I have received yours from Jamaica, of the 17th. I expect you are in Princeton before now, and know it will give you pleasure to hear that we are all well at Frankfort. I don't find that the disorder is abated in the city, but cannot hear that it is any where in this neighborhood, or has been. I am impatiently expecting to hear from you, and hope there are letters now at the post-office ; but it is seldom we can get them till the day after they are there. I am very glad you wrote to Mr. Smith ; his kindness to us all, and attention to you, called for a return, and I know it gave him a great deal of pleasure, as it did also your sister. Wherever you travel, I wish you to use every prudent precaution in your power ; but do not let apprehension affect your spirits, but look to that Providence who is able, and, I trust, will preserve you from every danger. I would have you carry camphor about you, and your handkerchief wet with vinegar : if you could have a little vial of spirits of camphor, and sometimes take a drop or two in your mouth, and wet your handkerchief as often as you can with vinegar, unless you can conveniently carry that also about you.

I would not wish you, my dear John, to distress yourself so much with apprehensions for our safety ; we cannot insure it, in truth, any where ; but we will hope the best, and trust that a kind Providence, who has in so many instances dispensed his favors to us, will continue to preserve you, as well as us, from every danger. We cannot, indeed, my dear son, be grateful enough to a heavenly Father who has hitherto so particularly favored us ; but I hope we may not be wholly

insensible of the numberless instances of his care and protection. That the Almighty may still continue his goodness to us all, and particularly guard and preserve my dear John from all danger, is the sincere prayer of his affectionate parent,

HANNAH HOBART.

P. S. Do take care and guard yourself against taking cold when you travel; be sure you take your surtout, even if it is not cold, it will keep you warm and dry, and I hope it will not be long before you can get a new one. I fear, my dear John, you make yourself too uneasy on account of the danger you think we are in. We are all well yet, and have no reason to think we are more unsafe now than we have been. It is proper, to be sure, to use every prudent precaution, but I hope all our fears are not well founded. In travelling, be careful you do not go to any house where the disorder is or has been, and keep a prudent distance from persons that you do not know.

I cannot help telling you, my dear John, how highly I was gratified in hearing you have established such a character at college. Dr. Smith spoke of you to Mr. Smith, and to your sister, in terms of the highest commendation; he could not have said more in praise of any one, and you may be sure I do not doubt your deserving it.

Monday Morning.

After this letter, the reader will not be surprised to learn, that maternal anxiety provided for him the means of avoiding all risk from public stages, and that his brother-in-law's

chaise and clerk were soon after despatched to Princeton for him, bringing him in safety to his anxious mother, at her temporary home in Frankfort. But this is anticipating the conclusion of a two years' residence, which deserves a fuller record.

CHAPTER III.

Residence at College—Whig and Clio Societies—Contest for College Honors—Character—Letters—Thoughts of the Ministry.

It were not easy to find a more pleasing picture of college life, than is exhibited in his own and his companions' boyish letters already alluded to ; young Hobart's especially, are full of gayety of heart, and warm, generous emotions. Life was in its spring, and the world was all bright around him, but more especially that little world in which he then dwelt. Princeton was an Athens to him, and its groves as those of Hecademus. His professors were sages, and the class a philosophic band of brothers. Such is their romantic tone: but still, however colored by an ardent fancy, it must assuredly have been to him a scene of great enjoyment, and no less improvement, and speaks much for the talent and good sense

of those by whom the college was at that time governed.

Among the greatest sources to him of both, was the academic association of the students, known under the name of the *Whig* Society; which, together with its rival, the *Clio*, still continues, it is understood, to call forth, in zealous competition, the best talents of Nassau Hall. It may be concluded he would not be backward in joining one of them. One of his earliest letters says, 'I daily experience the advantages of my situation; and, my dear Mamma, you may rest assured that no endeavors of mine shall be wanting. Within these few days, I have entered one of the societies, and am confident that the improvement I shall derive from it will nearly equal that from the college.'

The honors and prosperity of the one with which he connected himself, constitute one of his most favorite themes, while the zeal and ardor with which he advocates its cause, display not only his own character, but the influence which such institutions are calculated to exercise over the excitable mind of youth; and, if well directed, *may* exercise to the best ends. With young Hobart, the impression left was never effaced; and in after-life he not only often recurred to this period as one of peculiar

happiness and profitable labor, but in the character of trustee of another college, warmly urged the liberal patronage of similar societies of the students, from the vivid recollection of the benefits he had himself derived from them. In none probably of our colleges have they operated either more powerfully or more beneficially than in the one with which he was now connected, being not only recognised, but cherished by the academic authorities, and their literary rivalry excited by the recognition of membership in the annual distribution of college honors. To one of his absent companions, he thus writes the news of a doubtful victory: 'The examination of the junior class is over; the honors given out as follows: How, (Whig,) Latin Salutatory; Hutcheson, (Clio,) English Salutatory; Green, (C.,) Brown, (W.,) Heister, (C.,) Kollock, (C.,) Elmendorf, (C.,) Polhemus, (C.,) *Intermediates*. The superiority of the Whigs would have been greater, if Ker, one of the first in the class, had not gone home last spring, and Keese, another valuable member, been sick; they would both have received very high honors; but even as it is, the Whigs bear off the palm — our society is confessedly superior.' If, in the case of others, he entered with such warmth into its interests, it may naturally be presumed the question

became more exciting when he found himself held up as the representative of their strength. On this occasion, the contest appears to have been more than usually animated.

While young Hobart stood forth by acclamation as the champion of the Whigs, the Clios were represented by a young Virginian of the name of Bennet Taylor; no unworthy competitor, as it would seem, on the score of merit, and certainly one of equal devotion to the honors of his clan. The weighty decision of the first honor, the Latin Salutatory, long hung in suspense. The *Senatus Academicus* were understood to be equally divided — one-half voting for Hobart, the other for Taylor. At the head of the first stood his friend the vice-president, whose opinion carried great weight; the other was led by the senior professor, Dr. Minto, an old gentleman, who added to a very sound judgment, great zeal, and long experience. Neither party being willing to give way, and no means, as it would seem, being provided for the decision of such a case, they resorted, it is said, to the summary, but very unclassical procedure of the tossing up of a coin. As it rose in the air, Dr. Smith, as if to secure the omen, cried out, ‘Heads for Hobart,’ and heads it was. The result may be best told in the words of the youthful victor.

‘Mr. Taylor was not satisfied with this decision of the faculty. He communicated his sentiments to Dr. Smith, and endeavored to make it appear to him that the Latin Salutatory, which fell to my lot, would place me, in the opinion of the audience, above him. Dr. Smith accordingly mentioned this circumstance to me, and intimated that as I could speak the Valedictory, and Mr. Taylor could not, he thought it would be an act of candor in me to relinquish the Salutatory, and take the other.’ Had it been any but a ‘Clio’ that was to enjoy it, young Hobart’s heart would probably have given way under such an appeal; but the ‘Whig’ was strong within him, and he replied, in the spirit of all conquerors, ‘I will not give up an oration which has fairly and honorably fallen to my lot.’

The ‘musa pedestris’ of Princeton was, it seems, awakened by this long-protracted contest; and if ‘Clio’ descended, as the letters charge her with doing, to personal invective, something unquestionably must be pardoned to the wounded feelings of the losing party, from whom chance, not merit, had wrested away an equal prize. Alluding to these attacks, young Hobart thus concludes his letter to an absent ‘Whig:’ ‘Resentment at his conduct lives not in my bosom; I remember it only to relate it

to you, and would have it go no further.' But alas ! for the vanity of human ambition. The Latin Salutatory thus eagerly sought after was never delivered. In the summer of this year, (1793,) as already mentioned, the yellow fever first appeared in our country, breaking out in Philadelphia a short time previous to the Commencement exercises at Princeton. This new enemy drove out all other thoughts than those of safety from the minds both of victors and vanquished. The authorities of the college took the alarm, its inmates were dispersed — the public Commencement in fright dispensed with, and the academic honor, thus long sought and earnestly contended for, announced but to the ears of a trembling few, to whom it conveyed no new information, and whose thoughts were even then intent on other things. 'Sic transit gloria mundi.'

But this narrative awakens another reflection. How are we to estimate among the means of a sound education, the academic competition which runs into such eager contest ? Is it favorable, on the whole, to the formation of a manly character ? Does it not, on the contrary, tend to weaken the moral principle, by habituating the mind to stronger stimulants than those of mere duty ? Does it not lead to the substitution of the spirit of

party, in place of individual reason and conscience? These are questions certainly not easily answered, and deserve, in our country more particularly, to be well weighed, since these anticipated results go to cherish the very evils which threaten to work our political ruin. But setting this aside, even in the individual character, may not the sharpening of talent, and the acquisition of knowledge, be too dearly bought with the formation of such enfeebling propensities. Their influence, however, on the mind of young Hobart, may be estimated lightly, for he carried with him through life a certain individuality of character, which instead of receiving impressions from without, was continually stamping them on all around. In the features of his mind there was what artists term *sharpness*, one of those decisive marks by which the original, in painting, is always to be distinguished from the copy, and the clay model from the plaster cast. No man that knew Bishop Hobart at any period of his life, but must have seen this; that his character, whatever estimate might be formed of it, was one struck off by the hand of nature, having in it such persuasive force, that his sentiments and example were continually taking hold on the hearts and conduct of those with whom he associated, leaving them (few but will acknow-

ledge) wiser and better than he found them. Working on such a mind, competition may certainly go far without degenerating either into personal rivalry, or party attachment. This is pleasingly indicated in a letter written soon after quitting college, to one whom he left in it, and whom he addresses by the familiar appellation of 'Dear Tom.' Alluding to his friend's statement, that 'emulation and friendship eminently prevail among the members of the Society,' he thus breaks forth : 'O, may these long continue to influence them ! What more delightful sight can be presented to the eye, than a band of youths, whom friendship and a noble emulation animate ; the prize they have in view is so valued, that each one seeks it with persevering ardor, each endeavoring to outstrip his companion, and yet each one giving his companion every assistance in his power. Their friendship is as strong as their emulation, and thus, both principles being equally powerful, give to all their actions the ardor of emulation, in union with mutual love.' An extract from a letter recently received from one of the surviving companions of his studies, will show that this was no picture of fancy. 'The interesting qualities of Hobart's heart and head, which distinguished him so much among his fellows, can never be forgotten.

He was ambitious, and did not attempt to disguise it; but it was that kind of ambition which every student must possess, if he aims at eminence. It never led him to overlook or under estimate the merits of others who were competing with him. On the contrary, though bent himself on reaching the goal, he manifested no desire of travelling in advance of his friends, but was pleased when they progressed with him *pari passu*, and manifested distress of mind when any of them fell visibly behind him. It was common for him to cheer his competitors when they seemed to flag, and to stimulate them to more action. His disposition was marked by benevolence, and when he saw those for whom he had a respect in the college classes below him, disposed to indolence or irregularity, it was his practice to visit their rooms, and invite them to his own, for the purpose of bringing them within the influence of his conversation and example. I recollect the instance of a youth from Long-Island, who was reclaimed from idleness, and a threatening habit of dissipation, by this course. The amiable qualities of his heart, and the vigorous powers of his mind, can never be effaced from my memory. I knew his thoughts and the motives which actuated him, and it was my belief there was none whose whole course of

conduct furnished a more unexceptionable model for imitation.*

However rare this character of ambition without envy, all concur that young Hobart exhibited it ; his rivals in study were still his brothers in affection, and the attachments he then formed, were ardent beyond the usual ardor of youthful intimacies. Now this is a point in which the editor is aware that the narrative he is about to give, may very easily be misinterpreted, since it brings before the reader such a succession of personal attachments on the part of young Hobart, as very naturally to excite a smile, or with some, perhaps, even a sneer, at their number and romantic fervor. But this would be doing both him and them great injustice, for such intimacies are proverbially fleeting, while his were all firm and enduring. Neither the bustling cares of an active station, nor even the dearer connections of riper years, were able to withdraw his heart from the friends of his boyhood. To the very last he turned to them with the feelings of almost childish affection. Separation did not make him forget them ; sorrow and misfortune but endeared them ; and what was the hardest trial of all, the errors of human frailty could not

* J. Burnet, Esq., Cincinnati, Ohio.

tear them from him. Friendship with him was a *living* plant which time strengthens, not withers, and in the hour of trial, a *fruit-bearing* plant, bringing forth actions as well as words. Many persons there are highly social without a capacity for friendship. An easy temper, and a languid mind, fit them for ready and changing intimacies ; but such certainly was not the temper that here unfolded itself. There was in it, on the contrary, that affectionateness of nature, which once rooted, never ceased to cling. Now such a character it is delightful to meet with, and to contemplate — and not only delightful, but improving. It serves to give us a better opinion of our common nature, and not only so, but to strengthen our confidence in its future prospects ; since, to see early affections thus outliving all the vicissitudes of life, and rising above the selfishness of years, is no small proof of the spirituality of that nature in which those affections reside : it is the triumph of mind over matter, and opens to us pleasing anticipations of what those affections will be in a purer and more spiritual state of being.

But from whatever source these intimacies sprang, they seem, at least, to have been prudently and wisely pursued, with a view to moral, intellectual, and religious improvement. The religious tone that pervades them

on the part of young Hobart is certainly remarkable. Even his earliest letters to his companions breathe this spirit — sentiments not merely of natural piety, but of Christian doctrine, argued and urged as specific motives to duty, and the intimacy of friendship thus made an instrument of holiness of life.

As in this point of view the character of Bishop Hobart, while living, was greatly misunderstood, and his zeal for the Church over which he presided turned into an argument against his vital piety, it is due to his memory, now that he is gone, fully to illustrate this beautiful trait in his life, to show how, even from his boyish days, his friendship was felt to be a blessing, from that influence which he was peculiarly fitted to exert over his intimates, being always steadily directed to the deepening and strengthening of their religious principles. Nor is it only to his memory that this exposition is due : it is still more due to the Christian public ; for what can constitute a deeper debt to humanity than to clear away from a great and good man's character the prejudices which weaken the force of his example, and to exhibit, in intimate union from earliest youth, those natural talents which lead to power, and those Christian graces which consecrate their influence.

The following letters are taken from an ample bundle preserved of the letters of his young friends. His correspondent, in the present case, was a graduate of the preceding year, who had just returned to his home in the South. However youthful, they give a pleasing picture of college life and intimacies.

Woodville, 3d December, 1792.

My dear Henry,

By this time you must have met with a good many hard knots in Helsham, but no doubt your penetrating genius can readily pierce the most crabbed. I am much pleased that you will do honor to our old room, and still more anxious that you should do honor to yourself. Only maintain your usual rank, which your abilities will fully enable, and your laudable ambition will prompt you to do, and the prize is yours. You have had the pleasure of spending this evening, I suppose, in our good old Society; a pleasure the loss of which I feel very sensibly. Were the members but half as sensible of the advantages that may be derived from that institution while at college, as they will be after they leave it, they would be far from neglecting their duties in it. But such is the nature of man—insensible of his present enjoyments, and complaining of imaginary evils. I have no news, political, moral, or natural, to send you, except that I have set up till after 12 o'clock writing to you and my other college friends; and you ought to consider that as a great mark of my friendship for you all, as you know very well it is not a trifle that could induce me to do such a thing. It is, however, by no means a trifle in the present case, but

the greatest luxury, not having as yet received a letter from you, which would, I confess, be a still greater feast. But my candle is almost out, and I shall then be obliged to go to bed. In the mean time, I remain your friend,

ALEXANDER WHITE the 3d.

P. S. Do not forget to direct your letters, Alexander White the 3d.'

'Woodville, April 1, 1793.

My dear Friend,

Your favor of the 10th March I received with singular pleasure on the 23d of the same month. But I hasten to another subject, in which I feel myself much concerned. It gave me a most pleasing sensation to discover that you were to represent us on the 4th July. I say *us*, because I cannot help assuming some portion of the honor acquired by the exhibition of my brother Whigs; but I was surprised to find you had thoughts of resigning the appointment, which, however, I hope you will not do. Let me entreat you in the name of a friend, of a brother, not to do it. That you would perform the duty with credit to yourself, with honor to the Society, and with a victory over your competitor, you must be fully sensible; and any expression of it from me might be disagreeable. But further, that you would disappoint the Society, and perhaps materially injure it by resigning, is also evident. I hope, therefore, if you have not some very particular reasons, unknown to me, you will cheerfully execute this honorable office. Your class having gone through their studies so rapidly, will give those who have abilities an opportunity to distinguish themselves. You ought to appropriate as

great a part of next session to reviewing as possible, that you may impress the knowledge you acquire more strongly on the memory, and appear with credit at the examination, which I found to be a very difficult matter, if not an impossibility. Assuring you of my sincere wishes for your happiness, farewell.

ALEXANDER WHITE.'

' Woodville, 8th May, 1793.

My dear Friend,

Yours of 23rd ultimo was gratefully received. I heartily thank you for the services you have rendered me, and perfectly approve of the manner in which you did it. I hope by this time you are once more safely seated at Princeton, where you can calmly enjoy the sweets of study and retirement, delicately seasoned with the occasional society of a few choice friends. Such a situation, I am inclined to believe, is the summit of earthly happiness; at any rate, I, in my twenty years' pilgrimage, have not found any thing superior. But I would not, by these observations, lessen the confidence you may have in your own prospects of the future, which no doubt are very fair. However pleasing a college life may be, I presume it would in time become wearisome, and the sphere too narrow and confining for an active and enterprising mind. I wish I could see the agitation which the hope of obtaining, and the fear of not obtaining honors, must now begin to excite in your class, though the distinguishing of six at the last examination was to be sure a very good omen for them. But I wonder you did not give me their names. If you consider it indelicate to mention your own, you might leave a blank for that, and insert the others. I need not mention with how much joy I hear of the

prosperity of our dear Society; you say it has the superiority in the lower classes, and it surely has in yours. I expect my fellow Whigs will make an honorable appearance at the next Commencement. On you much depends, and I am happy to hear you have but one rival, and that he is called so only by the Clios. I perfectly approve of your not taking formally into consideration the alterations in the laws proposed by the graduates. It has always been my opinion, that they, being absent from the college, should have little to do with legislation. The hall no doubt needed improvements, though to increase the library is in my mind a more desirable object than to add elegance to the room. Remember me to my friends in college, particularly Skinner, Terhane, the Wallaces, Hunter, and Brown.

Yours sincerely,

ALEXANDER WHITE.'

The following, though not in answer, is yet the earliest preserved of his own college letters.

'Frankfort, November 12, 1793.

My dear White,

The silence which has succeeded your last letter of the 29th July, has occasioned me considerable uneasiness. This anxiety harassed my mind for some time previous to the examination, though the attention my studies then required precluded my writing to you till that was concluded; and the necessary preparation for the Commencement, together with a jaunt to my friend Skinner on Long-Island, delayed the answer till some time in September, when I wrote you from Jamaica. Since that period I have postponed writing, from the

daily expectation of a letter from you, as well as from the calamitous circumstance which has deranged altogether my plans and wishes. The disorder which marked for the peculiar object of its ravages our unfortunate city, prevented the stated Commencement at Princeton from being held. The degrees were conferred privately on the few of the class who attended. Immediately after, I came to this place, where my brother-in-law, Mr. Smith, has a plantation, on which, since the commencement of the disorder, his own and my mother's families have resided. The improbability that it would subside time enough for his fall business in Philadelphia, induced him to open a store in this place; and as I engaged to go through an apprenticeship with him, I have been employed for some time past in attending upon it. The sudden subsiding of the disorder renders it safe for the citizens now to return to their long-forsaken habitations, and induces him to conclude on removing to town the latter end of the week: of consequence I shall shortly again revisit my native city; but ah, what has it not suffered since I last saw it. Yet in that trying period, when the ties of nature were so often broken, Heaven raised up men who, to say the least of them, were ornaments to human nature. Fearless of the disorder, they administered to the wants of the suffering sick, provided for the unfortunate orphan, performing every office of humanity at the hazard of their lives. Our friends Rhea and Otto are, I believe, out of the city, and well. Early has been at Princeton since the Commencement. Poor Wycoff has, I understand, fallen a victim to the disorder. Our friends at Princeton are doing well, but owing to there being no *competitions*, the Whigs had no

opportunity of showing themselves: I am happy to inform you they bear the superiority in every class. You must by this time be far advanced in the study of the law, and the time approaches when you will enter on the practice. May you, my friend, arrive at those honors in public life, without which wealth can yield but little pleasure, and acquire that wealth without which the honors of public life cannot be enjoyed. With a great desire to hear from you, and with much affection, I remain your sincere friend,

J. H. HOBART.'

' Woodville, 11th November, 1793.

My dear Henry,

The last letter I received from you was dated Jamaica, September 10th, which I would have answered long ago, but for the little probability there appeared of a letter reaching you. I now hasten to congratulate you, though at this late period, on having attained that distinction, the pleasing effects of which I have some knowledge of. It reminds me of what I once said to you, that reward follows merit, though sometimes "pede claudo." I am very sorry you had not an opportunity of displaying those abilities at a public Commencement, which I am confident you possess. Conrad has told me many anecdotes relating to college. I recollect perfectly well the perturbation that was in our class last summer, and which I myself did not entirely escape, though I believe I felt it no more than some who wore a hypocritical indifference. I am extremely happy to find that the Whigs continue to acquire additional honor, and to reflect it upon their absent brethren. I would by no means persuade you

to study law contrary to your interest; but there is one remark I think merits attention; that is, that your disposition and abilities are thought to be peculiarly adapted to the practice of the law. I mention this, because it is a matter indifferent persons are more capable to judge of than you are yourself; and I have often heard it said, "It will be a pity if Hobart is not a lawyer." But I have one request to make, that you will come and see me before you engage in business. It may seem a very unreasonable request that you should travel two hundred miles to see me; but I hope you will consider such a journey would be attended with many advantages, and I will engage to furnish you with such amusements as I possess, viz. a plenty of books and a few friends. Remember me sincerely to Skinner: independent of his being your friend, which is a sufficient recommendation, he is one of the few I have found among mankind who merit all the esteem of the purest heart. With all the well wishes of a sincere friend, I am constantly yours,

ALEXANDER WHITE.'

' Woodville, 29th January, 1794.

My dear Henry,

I have received yours of December 30th. I need not say with pleasure: a piece of blank paper from your hand would be pleasing; how much more a paper filled with those sentiments which are calculated to afford delight. Your account of the decision of the honors and the subsequent transactions was very satisfactory, and reminded me of the bustle excited in our class. I am much pleased with your conduct on the

occasion, and would observe that the treatment you met with may be considered an emblem of what every person, whom merit has rendered conspicuous, may expect from the invidious world. Since you consider the mercantile life most eligible, I most sincerely wish you happiness and prosperity in the pursuit of it. I can readily suppose that your feelings upon your change of situation were not very pleasing. Mine, I well remember, were far from it; but time and reason will reconcile every one to his condition. I was going to propose an agreement for our mutual benefit, — that when we become men of business, I should send our backwoods' merchants to deal with you, and you in return should empower me to collect from those who might prove delinquent; but perhaps this agreement may be postponed. I rejoice to hear that our fraternity still stands forth as the school of virtue and useful knowledge. My intercourse with it seems in a great measure cut off now that you have left it, but my attachment remains, and I hope you will occasionally write me what you know of its situation.

Yours truly,

ALEXANDER WHITE.'

'Woodville, 19th March, 1794.

My dear Henry,

I feel myself much obliged to my Philadelphia friends for their punctual correspondence, by which I am frequently served with an agreeable relish, after being satiated with the harsh food of the law. I often thought, during the winter, that it must be a most pleasant thing, when you could enjoy all the advantages of society, without exposure to the inclement

season; instead of being confined within the lonesome walls of a country cottage, almost buried in banks of snow. But how reversed is the comparison, as spring now approaches, with her vivifying influence, when the cottage is perfumed with rural fragrance, and all things look cheerful from the genial rays of Sol. How pleasing to hear the sweet singing-birds every morning announce the arrival of day, and by their melodious notes invite you to partake of their gayety. Fortune, or rather providence, is, generally speaking, equal to all in her favors; and indeed it would seem contrary to all our ideas of justice, if men in one line of life were denied equal happiness with others, when at the same time the good of the community requires that a variety of occupations should be pursued.

I have made some progress in my studies, but not so great as I expected I would have made by this time, when I began them. It is impossible, I find, to apply to them with *Nassovian* diligence. I mean now to begin a regular course of reading, intermixing history, &c., with the law, and will take the Bible as the first and most important history.

I am not certain whether this letter is paying a debt or advancing upon credit; but rather believe the latter is the case, and if so, I shall expect a good remittance, as punctuality, you know, is the life of merchandise; and beside, I shall be very necessitous. It always gives me pleasure to have a good paymaster for my debtor; there is then all the pleasure of anticipation, with a certainty of real enjoyment. With esteem and affection, I am your constant friend,

ALEXANDER WHITE.²

' Philadelphia, June 17th, 1794.

My dear White,

It is a long time since I have written to you, and much longer since I heard from you; a letter is now so great a rarity, that I anxiously wish for one. In mercantile phrase, I am largely the creditor, and you are greatly in arrears; which, if you fail to make up, I shall direct some attorney in your neighborhood to put it in suit. You had better, then, with all speed, hasten to discharge your debt. How much law have you got in your head by this time? Do you think you have enough to perplex an honest farmer, and make it appear to him that wrong is right? If so, for mercy's sake stop, for I am sure you have learned all the art of your profession.

The poor fellows at Princeton are kept as hard at it as ever, and the Whig Society rules them with a rod of iron.

Yours affectionately,

J. H. HOBART.'

On the above letter is endorsed, in Mr. Hobart's hand-writing,—*' Princeton, July 23d. Wrote to White informing him of my intention and views in entering into the ministry.'* This letter is not found. The next from him is as follows :

' Princeton, August 26th, 1794.

My dear White,

I thank you very sincerely for your good wishes in the new engagements on which I am entering; and the affectionate manner in which you express them, renders them still more pleasing to me. When I look

forward to the important duties that will be incumbent on me, I feel no small degree of anxiety, and were I to rely on myself alone, I should shrink back from the undertaking.

Your remarks on the importance of religion, my dear White, much pleased me. They spring from that good sense, and soundness of principle, which I may say without flattery have always distinguished you. I would add to what you have said: If religion be of acknowledged importance, why is it not more generally professed? If it be necessary to the existence of civil society, and to the support of government, why do not public men guide themselves by its precepts? Ought not every one who feels its importance, both as respects the present and the future, to regulate his conduct by it? This is certainly the dictate of reason. Those again who are influenced by religion to become austere in their conduct and deportment, though they may be sincere, are yet certainly misguided. The Christian has certainly the most reason to be cheerful. The prospect of future happiness gives additional enjoyment to the present, and is a powerful support under every affliction. Though it do not wholly exclude the pleasures of the world, it yet offers others infinitely more valuable; while the consciousness that the greatest and best of Beings not only pardons his sins, but extends to him favor and protection, diffuses through the soul of the Christian a happiness which those alone who feel it can know.

The news of the death of our common friend, Rhea, has, I suppose, before this time reached you. Thus we see how the best prospects are prematurely blasted.

Does not the reflection naturally arise, "How uncertain is life and human enjoyments."

My time has passed very happily in the society of the students, but I cannot say I have done as much as I expected. It is probable that immediately after the Commencement I shall go to Philadelphia, and enter directly on the study of divinity. How and Campbell were competitors for the Latin Salutatory; the former is a fine little fellow from Trenton, and lived with me during the last year I was at college; he is not more than seventeen years of age.

I got a letter the other day from Watkins. In the southern States they are for tarring and feathering every one who does not approve of every violent measure which hot-headed demagogues may advocate. Freedom of opinion, that very essence of liberty, is destroyed among them, and yet they wish to make a monopoly of republicanism. If I am not allowed to think as I please and profess my sentiments, as long as I support the constitution and laws of my country, it is of little consequence who prevents me, whether the Empress of Russia, or one of these democratic societies. Indeed I sometimes tremble for the safety of my country. Such is the spirit of license cherished by ambitious demagogues, and countenanced by the heat and impetuosity of some of the representatives of the people, that I sometimes fear the consequences will be fatal to the peace and happiness of our country. But I yet hope and trust that the good sense of the people in general will be made, in the hands of Providence, the instrument for supporting the liberty and prosperity of these United States. Your affectionate friend,

J. H. HOBART.²

' Woodville, 8th September, 1794.

My dear Henry,

To you, who are acquainted with my attachment to our departed friend, I need not express the grief his death occasioned me. The time has been, when I thought I could scarcely live without him; but a long separation, though it did not lessen my affection, nevertheless diminished my dependence on his advice and example to direct my conduct:—but I hasten from a subject on which my mind is but too inclined to dwell.

The decision of the honors presents more cheerful ideas; no doubt our Society has produced another crop of valuable fruit, and while we see time consuming one even before it is mature, it is a consolation that there are fresh supplies still growing. Your favor of the 10th instant leads my mind to a variety of interesting reflections. The fleeting nature of time, which passes by almost unnoticed by the whole creation, is a matter highly important to every accountable being. Time carries us far distant from objects that once were present, and pleased our fancy, and gratified our desires, while we are yet thinking that we need only turn about to behold them as usual. The difficulty of keeping our passions under the guidance of reason, is painted by you in striking colors. This difficulty seems designed as a criterion to ascertain our real virtue; for I conceive, as far as any person indulges a passion in opposition to reason, so far does he wander from the straight and narrow path of virtue. Although I believe few are happier than myself, yet I find a great difference between my present situation and my former one at college, where every thing glided on in tranquil felicity. It is, therefore, with mixed feelings of pleasure and

regret, that I hear of your being again seated within the enchanting walls of Nassau; of pleasure, because you must there enjoy what can rarely be experienced in this tumultuous world — of regret, because it produces a fresh recollection of those happy moments I once enjoyed there, and which are gone, alas, never to return. You will, no doubt, well improve the very favorable opportunity given for study and reflection. As far as I am judge, your plan is extremely proper. The Bible is certainly the foundation of all true religion; but while a thorough acquaintance with it is absolutely necessary, you will yet reap great advantage from a general and extended knowledge of other subjects. Such knowledge would be profitable to persons in any line of life, but more especially to those who derive their usefulness from their powers of persuasion. Knowledge fills the mind with ideas, and an acquaintance with good authors greatly facilitates the expression and explanation of those ideas. As soon as my intended change of business is effected, and I become so settled as to pay proper attention to so great a subject, I mean to appropriate a certain portion of my time to the study of the Bible.

I remain, &c.,

ALEXANDER WHITE, 3d.'

Of this college intimacy, the last record that remains, is a letter dated 'Woodville, 21st January, 1796,' which closes the correspondence with the theme with which it began, 'the welfare of the Whigs.' 'Well, what is going on in our *alma mater*? Is the old routine of

action still kept up? How do our brother Whigs prosper? Are they as distinguished for their virtue and literature, as those from whom they take their name were for their patriotism? In short, what are you and all my friends at Princeton doing?—but I suspect my friends are now scattered over the face of the earth.'

CHAPTER IV.

Intimacy with young Skinner—Letters—Death—Character.

AMONG young Hobart's college friendships, there was one which deserves a fuller mention, not only from the peculiar warmth of the attachment, but from the deeper interest given to it by an early and long lamented death. Abraham Skinner, to whom allusion has already been made, as a junior student from Long-Island reclaimed by his friend's influence from thoughtlessness, if not from vice, appears to have been an amiable youth, of great mildness of character, sweetness of disposition, and purity of heart, though by nature inclined to indolence, and little accustomed by habit to self-denial. Above sixty letters from his young Mentor still remain to testify the warmth, sincerity, and spiritual value of his friendship.

They occupy the period of two years, which intervened between their separation at college and the death of Skinner. The following will be sufficient to convey their moral tone, the college details being omitted as uninteresting.

' Philadelphia, May 8th, 1794.

My dearest Skinner,

As I cannot be with you, I wish you had a companion who might, in some degree, supply the absence of your friend. A disposition so remarkably fond of society as yours, stands in need of much indulgence; but as you cannot now enjoy it, be contented. Reflect that your retired situation gives you many advantages. You can pursue with more vigor your studies, and standing less in the way of temptation, acquire habits of seriousness and reflection. Society, however, is necessary, and as you cannot enjoy as much as you wish, strive to render what you have more agreeable. Indeed, my dear Skinner, I think your situation valuable on many accounts, and the greatest happiness I can enjoy in my absence from you, will be to hear of your improvement. I am, therefore, delighted to hear that you have read so much during the last winter. You have considerable time for improvement before you; every moment of it is valuable. But religion is the one thing needful. All our attainments in human science, all our boasted improvements of the mind, will sleep in death. But religion will be our stay through time, and through eternity. Oh, my dear Skinner, let true religion be our choice, and let us learn what true religion is from the Scriptures of God. We

shall there find that repentance, faith, and obedience are its main pillars. Let us not, then, place our reliance in the mere performance of external duty, nor even in those more amiable accomplishments which do not flow from a sincere love of God and faith in a Redeemer. If we are not feelingly convinced that of ourselves we can do nothing, that the Spirit of grace must subdue and purify our diseased nature, and that the all-atoning merits of a blessed Redeemer alone can give us a title to immortal happiness, and reconcile an offended God, all our works and righteousness will avail us nothing. Let me, then, earnestly entreat you to give attention to your spiritual concerns, to read the word of God and comments upon it; and above all, to pray earnestly that he would guide you by his Holy Spirit in the way of truth. I long ardently to see you, my dearest Skinner, and rest assured that, if in my power, I will embrace you this summer. * * * *

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

J. H. HOBART.'

Princeton, July 12, 1794.

* * * *

The scenes around me often recall you, my dearest Skinner, to my memory, and raise emotions of tenderness and affection which I cannot express. It was here our friendship was first formed, here we have passed the happiest hours, and here our affection went through those various trials which have proved its sincerity. But why be *grateful* to me? I want not what I do not merit. Your letter breathes an affection and sincerity which will always make you dear to me. I would,

therefore, use my influence in earnestly entreating you to make the salvation of your soul the object of your immediate and constant care. Seriously examine your own heart. 'Tis the grace of God alone, through a Saviour, that can subdue it — that can change its obstinate and sinful desires. You will meet with many discouragements; the world, the flesh, and the devil are all your enemies; they will all strive to destroy the divine seed in your soul; but your helper is God, your redeemer is the LORD. Trust in the Saviour, he is all-powerful, he can vanquish all your enemies. Seek him and you shall find him. He never yet rejected the penitent sinner. Oh, my friend, seriously think on these things. "Taste and see that the LORD is good;" that "religion's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Unworthy as I am, feeble as my faith is in the Saviour, I would not exchange the peace I feel from my trust in him, for all the honors and enjoyments of the world. Recollect that these will fade away, and the *end of time* will be the *beginning of eternity*. I will not, my dearest Skinner, ask your pardon for being thus free with you; my love for you *constrains* me. I also stand in need of your prayers. Pray that God would subdue by his grace the corruption of my heart, that he would wean me from an attachment to the world, and that he would make every power of my soul, as well as every action of my life, to praise and adore his great and glorious name. Pray especially for yourself. If you do not already, pray that you may be led to see your guilt and misery, and need of a Redeemer; that you may embrace JESUS CHRIST as your Saviour, and trust in him with your whole soul. And that this may be

your condition, use diligently, perseveringly, and above all, *sincerely*, all the means of grace. Have stated times for devotion. Read the Bible, that precious treasure of the grace and love of God, and pray that God would enlighten your understanding.

Your affectionate friend,

J. H. HOBART.'

'*Princeton, August 9, 1794.*

* * * * *

If any thing, my dearest friend, could render you dearer to me than you already are, it would be your filial affection; and as this is particularly your motive to the study of the law, I would not, for a moment, think of advising you to any thing else. No, that is the profession it is your duty to pursue, and in which, perhaps, with your feelings, you can best serve your Creator. It rejoices me to think it is your wish and intention to serve him. I am glad to find you have made such progress in human science; but oh, neglect not that divine and heavenly knowledge which will make you happy here and hereafter. The law, you think, in the practice of it, will not be very pleasing. Neither that, my Skinner, nor any other profession, can afford you real happiness without religion. I am far from supposing that the practice of the law is incompatible with holiness of heart; but as you may meet with more temptations in one profession than in another, so I think you will meet with a great many in the law; but a firm trust in your Saviour, under the assistance of the grace of God, will enable you to go through them all. My first wish is, let your profession be what it will, that you may obtain and preserve an interest in the atone-

ment of the Redeemer, and serve him and your God in holiness of life. I remain, my dearest Skinner,

Your affectionate friend,

J. H. HOBART.'

'Philadelphia, November 10, 1794.

My dearest Skinner,

* * * Your letter of the 31st October yielded me peculiar pleasure. While it was expressive of the warmest affection, it conveyed information relative to your studies and pursuits in the highest degree pleasing. Separated from you, a very principal consolation to me is, that you are engaged in the improvement of your mind, and that your prudence and goodness lead you, in a reliance on the assistance of the Almighty, to avoid every course that would tend to the debasement of your mental faculties, or your moral taste.

With respect to the members of the law societies of which you speak, I hope you will exercise your usual prudence, and contract no intimacy further than common civility requires, without being assured that their characters are unblameable and their dispositions good. Better be without companions than have bad ones. The study of your profession, and the assistance you give your father, render your present situation most proper, and therefore it should be most pleasing.

You write very feelingly on the subject of religion, and complain that you want a friend to direct you. Where will you find one? My dear Skinner, "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," is ever present with you, and ready to assist you. Look not unto a worm of the dust, but look unto your Saviour, and through him to

your God. "His love is indeed better than life." That he may guide, preserve, and bless you, is the prayer of a friend more affectionate than language can express.

J. H. HOBART.'

'Princeton, January 27, 1795.

You are certainly, my dear Skinner, under the greatest obligations to your dear parents, and I rejoice that you have it in your power to make a return. As well as yourself, I feel the impulse of gratitude to my one only parent, whose affection has extended to me every proper gratification, though at the expense of her own ease. Alas, how far do I fall short of the gratitude due to this my earthly parent, and how infinitely more defective am I in a proper expression toward that heavenly Parent "who giveth me all good things richly to enjoy!" I feel grateful to my dear mother for the willingness with which she consents to my now living from her. She was pleasing herself with the hope that I would spend my time in future with her. In this she makes a great sacrifice. Her income, which has never been more than barely sufficient to support her family, has become now, owing to the enhanced price of provisions, and the depreciation of money, virtually less; and thus she must deprive herself of many gratifications, in order to maintain me at Princeton. Thus does she sacrifice her own comfort for that of her son. But this she has always done. Oh, my friend, Providence has indeed blessed me in her with a mother whose value and worth I am afraid I shall never sufficiently know, till I am deprived of her. But I pray God that he will warm my heart with gratitude, and make my whole life a suitable return for her love.

GOD has given you talents, my best friend, which are capable, by due cultivation, of advancing you to honor; and with the disposition you have to improve them, I often please myself with the prospect of the future usefulness of my friend. May he qualify you for every duty, and enable you so to live in this life, that you may finally live with him in life everlasting.

Yours affectionately,

J. H. HOBART.'

'Princeton, March 14th, 1795.

I received the usual satisfaction from the last letter of my dearest friend. It was the more pleasing, because it was written in those moments of cessation from business which you might have given to relaxation. To be always so engaged in business as to possess no leisure for reflection, is equally detrimental to the improvement of the mind and the morals. "To commune with our own hearts" is a duty of religion: it will never be otherwise implanted in the heart. To put the busy scenes of the world at times at a distance—to consider a future state as our home—to contemplate the perfections of the Deity, and the duty of imitating them—to hold in view the value of religion, and its glorious rewards in a future state—are among the best cherishers of virtue and piety.

Sleep, as you observe, is sweet to the body fatigued by labor, or the mind by study; and the goodness of God is conspicuous in so ordering the succession of day and night as to please by their variety, as well as by the repose which one affords from the duties of the other. You find yourself, you say, unable to do much at night; in fact, if the day be well improved, the night is best given to repose. My eyes still continue so weak as to

prevent me studying at night ; but I generally rise at five in the morning, so that by the evening I get pretty well tired, though I find I cannot study as much as I wish, from indisposition sometimes, from hindrance at others.

What pleasure would I receive, my dearest friend, could you enjoy at this place with me, the advantages and pleasures of retirement. How would our exertions be bent to mutual improvement. Ah, my friend, the pleasing hopes we have so often indulged of spending our time together, will not, I am afraid, be soon realized. Duty at present calls us, and perhaps through life will call us, to different scenes of action. We must acquiesce. Let us be diligent in framing our lives according to the will of God, and we shall then spend an eternity of happiness together. There can be no greater incentive to duty than a sense of our obligations to him, and no support more effectual under the cares and misfortunes of life, than that which the enjoyment of his favor confers. Let me know what place of worship you attend. Dr. Moore,* one of the Episcopal preachers, is, I am told, a man of great talents and sound piety.

I dare say you take great pleasure in improving your mind. I know I do, and yet my progress is not equal to my wishes. I am animated to diligence very much by the consideration of the many great and good characters of other days. I wish frequently we were together, in order that we might rightly regulate and improve our time. But since we are denied this happiness, let us be strenuous in our exertions to improve ourselves and one another. We cannot sufficiently praise our God that he has in every respect connected our duty with our happiness ; for religion requires the sacrifice of no one

* Afterward Bishop of the Diocese of New-York.

passion, nor the practice of any one duty, which is not calculated to promote our peace of mind, and our best temporal interests. May this reflection, with a sense of the long-suffering goodness of God notwithstanding our sins, excite us to repentance and reformation. Let me, then, press you, as I would urge myself, to be "diligent in working out your salvation." Delay not the great work of repentance till it be too late. Begin with the reformation of heart and life, abstaining from every known sin, and practising every known duty; and let all your exertions be accompanied with sincere and fervent prayer to God for his grace, without which they cannot be effectual; and may He, who is abundant in mercy and grace, form our hearts to his most blessed image, and our lives to his most holy law, that when this mortal life is ended, we may be received into life eternal, through the all-sufficient merits of CHRIST our Saviour. Do not our hearts answer, Amen? O let us, then, enter on that course of life which will conduct us to the mansions of eternal bliss. That God may preserve, bless, and finally crown you with eternal happiness, my dearest Skinner, is the constant prayer of your sincerely affectionate

HOBART.'

If such admonitions can be rendered more impressive, it is by the reflection that the young friend to whom they were addressed was within a few weeks prematurely cut off by the hand of death; he fell a sacrifice to the prevailing epidemic of that summer, after an illness of but four days. The last letter of young Hobart,

in the hands of his biographer, addressed to his friend, is equally admonitory with the one just given. After noticing the sudden death of two dissipated students in the college, he thus closes: 'It is an awful lesson, and affords to all a proof of the advantages which in the hour of death the good man enjoys over him who has spent his time in "drunkenness and riotous living," or in "fulfilling the lusts of the flesh." May you and I, my friend, warned thereto by these instances of mortality, be diligent in our preparation for the awful hour of death, and the more solemn day of judgment.

J. H. HOBART.'

How solemn this admonition! It was scarcely more than received and read before the reader was hurried to the tomb. He died the 6th of September, 1795.

The following letter is from the afflicted father, communicating the intelligence.

'My dear Hobart,

How shall I begin this sad epistle! I must, I must begin it, and be you prepared to read. My darling boy is no more. With this morning's dawn his pious soul took its flight to regions of happiness and peace. Yes, my friend, his race, though short, is run, and he is gone, I hope, to meet a merciful God. O sad lesson, O bitter cup! how shall I drink it! I will, I will bow submis-

sive to Him who cannot err, who gave to me, and has taken from me ; blessed be his holy name. Teach me, O gracious God, to bear my affliction ; support and strengthen me, and make me sensible of my dependence upon thee. But amidst this direful confusion and distress, what a consolation that he had his reason almost to the last ; and in his lucid intervals, very shortly before his dissolution, his expressions and ejaculations exhibited strong proofs of his resignation to the will of Heaven, and a firm reliance on his God, through the merits of a blessed Redeemer. Let these things, my friend, comfort you, and learn by his fate to be always ready. Your letter of 1st September he received on his death-bed ; it was read to him by his mother, but the invitation came too late. You have our blessings for it ; and though my child is dead, I know with you his memory will survive : he had a place in your heart, and I know it will not be effaced.

Your afflicted, but sincere friend,

A. SKINNER.

New-York, 6th September, 1795.

Sunday, 9 A. M.

P. S. On opening his desk this morning, the first thing that presented itself to me was the enclosed. I am induced to think it was part of a letter intended for you. Keep it ; it is his last. If ever you come this way come to me, and let me embrace my dear child's friend. Write me, Hobart ; it will console me, it will give his mother some ease.

2d P. S. Pardon me for not sending you the paper above alluded to, his mother cannot spare it yet ; but I will preserve it for you.'

The endorsement on this letter reads thus :
' Abraham Skinner, Esq., New-York, September 6, 1795. Containing information of the death of his son, *my dearest friend*, who was first united to me in the bonds of a close friendship in the summer of 1793, at Princeton College. I did not receive this letter at Frankfort till the 14th, the day I entered on my nineteenth year. Melancholy birth-day. I write down these circumstances, from a wish to preserve on a tablet more durable than memory, every thing relating to this melancholy event.'

The answer returned to the heart-broken father leads him to his only source of comfort.
' My dear Sir, — I sincerely hope and pray that the weight of grief which overpowered you has been rendered lighter by those consolations which a trust in the wisdom and goodness of the gracious Parent of the universe never fails to inspire. Never did a father lament the loss of a more amiable son. To cease to mourn altogether is impossible. Religion requires us not to smother the feelings of nature ; but while she permits us to mourn, she teaches us not to "mourn as those who have no hope," for we enjoy the blessed assurance, that the souls of those we love exist beyond the grave, and we trust that the virtue and piety of him we lament, has procured him, through the

merits of his Saviour, an admittance into those blissful regions where “sorrow and sighing are done away”—thither let us aspire. Convinced of the uncertainty of earthly enjoyments, let us seek those which are at God’s right hand, and we may then hope once again to enjoy the affection of him whose loss we deplore. Strangers and pilgrims upon earth, he has arrived before us at the end of his journey. He has left us to struggle with many difficulties in our pilgrimage. These he has escaped; why then should we repine? His crown of glory was attained with little toil. Infinite wisdom sees fit to try us longer.’

The reply to this marks still more strongly the feelings of the grateful father.

‘Jamaica, L. I., October 14th, 1795.’

Since the receipt of your affectionate letter, which is the only one I have received since the death of my dear boy, we have abandoned our distressed dwelling, and fled to this place, where we have found an asylum from the dreadful contagion, but not from the wretchedness occasioned by our sad misfortune. No, Hobart; no time, no change, can eradicate that remembrance. Yet why do I reason thus? why do I complain? ’Twas the will of Heaven — ’twas right. He was not mine, he was too good for such a world, and lived as he died, prepared for death, and fitted for a glorious immortality. A few minutes before his last, sensible, calm, and serene, he gave me proofs of his willingness

to depart, and his last accents breathed submission to the will of Heaven. May Heaven bless you, my dear Hobart, in your pursuits in this life, and may God ALMIGHTY, of his infinite mercy and goodness, receive you hereafter, with the joyful sound of 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy LORD.' Adieu, I can write no more.

A. SKINNER.'

That the survivor felt the separation deeply and long, is sufficiently evident from his careful preservation, through a busy life, of these early records, but it must have been certainly, at all times, with the alleviating thought that his friendship had not been 'of this world.' Well were it, indeed, for youthful intimacies, if they were oftener thus hallowed.

Of one thus mourned over, it is pleasing to find that he merited the grief, and that less partial pens have, with equal warmth, recorded his virtues. In the Calliopean Society, in New-York, of which he was a member, a eulogium was delivered on him by one of a talented family, William, the elder brother of Washington Irving. In it he describes him as 'the young, the amiable, and the accomplished.' The conclusion of the address shows how deeply such events speak, even to youthful hearts, and almost reconciles the mind to the wisdom of such dark and painful provi-

dences. ‘Since so frequent,’ says he, ‘and so severe are our losses—since friend after friend is dropping into the grave, let us cement our little circle still stronger by increasing the ties of affection; let us, while we cherish their remembrance, emulate their virtues. So shall we again meet, after having performed our part on this stage of probation, in a better world, where neither disease nor death shall come to disunite us, but eternity itself shall immortalize our union.’ A ‘monody’ on his death, recited in the same society, evinced alike their attachment and admiration; and a note from a living pen, in reference to the present work, shows that he is not yet forgotten by its few surviving members. It concludes in these words: ‘I can bear ample testimony to the character given of Skinner, and freely add that his warmth of friendship was equalled only by his love of literature, and his ardent desire to acquire knowledge.’* In the New-York Magazine of the same year, his virtues were still more publicly recorded: ‘His genius, virtue, and goodness of heart, enhanced by the amiable frankness of his disposition, endeared him to a numerous circle of friends; these qualities, added to an affectionate discharge of

* James Swords, Esq., New-York.

the filial and fraternal duties, made his loss extensively lamented, and must have deeply embittered the pang that tore him so suddenly from the arms of a family whose fairest hopes were fixed on him.'—(Vol. vi. p. 568.)

CHAPTER V.

Intimacy with young Forsyth—Letters—Death—Younger Brother—
Intimacy with Grant, Scott, &c.—Letters.

Although the one just recorded was the earliest, and perhaps the warmest of young Hobart's intimacies, it was not the only one. One more was destined to an early dissolution—two others continued through life to cheer, and sometimes to agitate, a bosom feelingly alive to all the tenderest emotions of our nature. The first alluded to was with a youth, whose name thus appears, for the first time, in a letter to his friend Skinner.

'Princeton, August 25th, 1794.

I wish you here, particularly to know a sweet boy, for whom I indeed feel a great affection. I want you to love him too. His name is Forsyth. His father was marshal for the district of Georgia, and was shot dead, while in the execution of his office, by one Beverley Allen. Perhaps you may have read the cir-

cumstances of his death in the papers last winter. He is about fourteen. Poor fellow, his sensibility is very great. We were walking together last Saturday, when the circumstances of his father's death, and the situation of his family, rushed so forcibly on his mind, that he cried till I almost thought he would break his heart. You may be sure such an instance of sensibility attached me to him. I have often talked to him of you, and he said to me the other day, 'You must let Skinner know I am here.' This was said with so much simplicity, it struck me very much. He seems to love you, merely from what he has heard of you. It gives me great satisfaction to think, that by my residence in college I may be the means of benefiting him in his studies. He is a little thoughtless, but desirous in the extreme of doing what is right; and I have no doubt but that if Providence should please to bless his own exertions and mine for him, he will come out of college with as high honors as any in his class. This would be a desirable event, for his widowed mother and a younger brother depend greatly upon him for their future comfort and happiness in life. Though young, he is nearly as tall as I am; his person not very handsome, but his countenance beams simplicity, innocence, and sweetness. In this respect it is an index to his mind, which is in the highest degree amiable and affectionate. Manly in his deportment, and pleasing in his manners, he is admirably calculated to excite esteem. His judgment astonishingly mature, and his genius quick and lively,—alive to every tender feeling, and particularly to the emotions of friendship, is he not worthy of our love? Yes, I love him for his own worth, and for his resemblance to my friend. What reason

have I not for gratitude to God for his kindness, in thus giving me the first of earthly blessings, the sweets of friendship.

Yours ever,

J. H. HOBART.'

After near three years' companionship had confirmed this hasty attachment into what better deserved the name of friendship, he too was taken from him.

After a short residence at Princeton as a graduate, young Forsyth returned to Georgia, his native State, entering upon the study of the law with the fairest prospects, but survived his return only a few months. The following letters are taken from a small package, carefully arranged, and endorsed by young Hobart : they date from the beginning of their intimacy, when one was in his eighteenth, and the other in his fourteenth year. Though the letters of Forsyth alone remain, they sufficiently indicate the subject and tone of those from his friend, to which they are answers ; and, indeed, like reflected light, perhaps best set forth his character, by showing the influence it exercised. It was at any rate a friendship which seems to have been blessed by Providence as the means of fitting for an early fate this amiable young man, whose thoughtless errors,

and skeptical opinions, seem gradually to have given way before the firmness and piety of his truly Christian friend.

' Princeton, November 5th, 1794.

My dearest John,

I received your letter of the 3d instant, which was, as usual, full of affection. My dear Hobart, your advice is that of a friend, and as such your Robert will observe it. I would now commence, as you advise, Knox's Essays, but that Fitzgerald has taken the keys of the library to Philadelphia, so that I can neither get that nor the old minutes. I am now reading Rollin's Taste of Solid Glory, (the session does not begin till Monday,) and have worked some of the Algebra. Scott has not come yet; I wrote him by post twice, and have not heard from him; I cannot conceive what he is after. In all your letters, my dear friend, appear those sentiments you have ever expressed for your Robert, and which have afforded me the greatest pleasure: the unreservedness with which I can unfold my heart and pour out my thoughts to the best of friends, is a blessing very few enjoy, and which I return God thanks for giving me. I entreat you, my Hobart, to forgive me for acting in so foolish a manner, and with so little reflection, as calling in question the affection of one who cannot avoid loving one who loves him as I do; it was entirely owing to my acting without thought, and I know you will excuse me. I will indeed, henceforward, impute to your affectionate wishes for my improvement in virtue, every thing you say, and beg that the fear of hurting me will not stop you from delivering your sentiments with that freedom with

which your conduct has always been marked ; and be assured, I will impute it to no other cause. O my Hobart, in what a condition, wretched and helpless, was I when I first saw you : when I reflect upon it, I cannot help praising God for at least calling me, through you, from destruction, I trust, to salvation. Yes, my dearest friend, my heart swells with love and gratitude to you for it ; but it was God directed you, and to him should my gratitude be turned.

Adieu ; may God bless you, my dear Hobart.

ROBERT M. FORSYTH.'

Since the name of Dr. Minto has been already mentioned in this memoir as one of the professors at this period in the college, the following characteristic picture may not be uninteresting : it is extracted from a subsequent letter of young Forsyth.

'When I was at Dr. Minto's he gave me this very good advice, — to attend to my business — that I might depend upon it, a young man is never in so important a station as when at college — if his character should be lost or impaired then, it would be a wonder if he ever regained it — that for his part, he would not give a pinch of snuff for a person who had not the fear of God before his eyes — that he was extremely sorry to hear there were some students in college who professed themselves infidels ; sometimes he thought them con-

temptible, and at others, objects of pity — that he hoped I would do well, and had not a doubt, from my conduct heretofore, that I would—that I must consider study as the only method to be serviceable to myself, or others ; and finally, that he thought a person must be wretched who did not serve other people.’

‘ New - York, April 23, 1795.

My dearest John,

I know not how to address you. I am very sensible of my folly in coming on here ; but Mr. J. persuaded me a little after we left Princeton, and I promised to come, without once reflecting on the folly and imprudence of such a thing. I pray you make allowances for me, and don’t be angry with me, and write to me, my devoted friend. I would have written to you before, but I could not get ink at one time, and at another paper, and therefore I hope you will forgive me. The more I reflect on my conduct, the more I repent of my folly. Manifest, then, your love to me, and be not offended. Do, my John, act now as if I had consulted you about coming, and had taken leave of you as I should have done. I shall write you every day while I stay, which will be but a very short time, as I shall return as soon as decency will permit. With that affection which always has and always will warm my breast, I remain your own

ROBERT.’

From the following it would seem, that before his return Mr. H. had quitted Princeton, on a visit to Philadelphia, during the short vacation.

' Princeton, May 5th, 1795.

My dear John's affectionate letter was received with much pleasure, and restored to his Robert's breast much happiness. I went to church to-day, and heard a very excellent discourse, which concluded with a short biography of Dr. Witherspoon. Good old Mrs. Knox has got two more boarders; young men from Jamaica, Long-Island. They are acquainted with our Skinner. One of them asked me if I was not a relation of his, I was so much like him. The appointment of president is not yet determined, or rather not yet known. People seem to have no doubt that Dr. Smith will be appointed. I have heard that Dr. Dwight and Mr. Woodhull are his opponents. I allow certain hours of the day for study, and I suppose study altogether ten hours. I intend, if possible, to continue in my resolution to study. I have got a curtain and keep it drawn. Do not forget to give my love to your mamma and sister, and kiss the children for your affectionate

ROBERT.

' Princeton, May 9th, 1795.

My dearest John,

Your letters are indeed expressive of the liveliest affection. They constitute a chief part of your Robert's happiness. My own dear friend, you cannot conceive, nor can language express, how much I miss you wherever I go: it is well you are not always to be from me; I should not enjoy much happiness. Mrs. Knox is very much pleased with her spectacles. You ask me to inform you more particularly about the young men from Jamaica; their names are Knight and King; they are pious good young men. The students are returning fast. Session will commence on Monday, when I am to

enter on a new regulation with regard to study, and am determined to hold, if possible, the first standing in the class. Scott, I expect, will be here on Monday; I asked Mr. Russell to bring him with him. Your advice, my dearest John, is sweet to me; it comes from your heart; continue it then; I receive pleasure, happiness, and joy from it; I will attend to it, and by the assistance of God, will endeavor to practise every virtue. Farewell! my dearest John; may God protect you; may he protect us both, and preserve our friendship pure and lasting.

ROBERT.'

'Princeton, May 14th, 1795.

My dearest John,

The affection your letters convey endear you strongly to me; but permit me to say, I do not deserve the half nor the third of what you give me. But be assured, dear John, that I am convinced of the value of time, and that I do and will employ it as well as I can. I attend prayers as usual, and find very little difficulty in rising in the morning. Caldwell read a sermon yesterday in church, and in the evening at society I read that of Sharpe "on repentance and a better life." I am very much pleased with him. He must have been a pious good man, and one that had the good of mankind greatly at heart. I have read him with much pleasure and attention. But I have much to answer for at the bar of God, more than I am able to bear. A Saviour offers assistance: O that God would enable me to accept; that he would change my heart, and receive it to himself. I will pray for pardon from him—I will endeavor by my future conduct to promote his honor and glory, and the happiness of my own soul. Your instructions, my dear John, are such as merit strict

attention, and by the assistance of God I will endeavor to put them in practice. Continue them, my dear friend, they strengthen me in my desire to follow the path of righteousness.

Scott has returned. You had better write him. On Monday evening last the college was illuminated, and the cannon fired, as a testimony of the pleasure the students received from the appointment of Dr. Smith, who delivered them his thanks the evening following in the hall, with an exhortation to study and improve their time. I have got to the bottom of my paper too soon. I wished to say much more, but shall not forget to sign myself your most devoted friend,

R. M. FORSYTH.'

'Princeton, September 8th, 1795.

My dearest Friend,

Your affectionate letter of yesterday reached me in the usual time. It was, as all your letters, clothed in language which conveyed to me the sentiments of your heart. My dearest friend, your advice is admirable. Let us, as you say, look up to God as our father and our friend, and receive the consolations which religion pours in. It is that alone which can render us happy, both here and hereafter. Were we to depend on the happiness afforded us in this life, we should be continually suffering disappointments and afflictions. But when resigned to the dispensations of Providence, when we have a just sense of his goodness, and all-seeing eye, all the anxieties and cares of this world may be wiped away. We will then be enabled to bear up under every affliction, and to account the greatest misfortunes as the order of Providence, and essential to our own good. By these means, if ever deprived of any beloved object, by

reflecting who gave us all things, we will be content and patiently submit.

Tell me whether you are of opinion I ought to compete, and what on. I practise your advice with regard to my speech, and will propose to the other members to meet and speak our pieces to each other frequently. The Society passed an order last evening for a new carpet, and Cantine was directed to write, send the money, and leave the choice to you. The Society expect it will be made up for the meeting of the graduates at Commencement, and you must therefore have it here time enough for that purpose.

I am happy to hear that you have the offer of the tutorship, and I hope you will accept of it, as enabling you to get an accurate knowledge of the languages, which you wish, and also have it in your power to inspect, more particularly, your Robert's conduct, and assist him to amend it. Write me often, my dear John; your letters afford me inexpressible satisfaction. Continue that advice which is so good and so parental. My dear Hobart, you are a kind and valuable friend; few are there so blessed as I am in respect to friendship.*

I am very much concerned about my oration. Mamma's business has *unavoidably* delayed me. I depend upon you, my John, for a speech. If you cannot get Mr. Abeel's, you must write me one. It will be giving you a great deal of trouble, but I know

* The conclusion of this letter, though opening up somewhat of college secrets, is yet so much to the point of young Hobart's character, that it may not be omitted. Besides, these things are no doubt better ordered now among the students of Nassau Hall.—ED.

it will be readily undergone to ease your Robert of a very heavy burden. If you have not time to write one, get some good speech for me, and write the addresses. Perhaps the one "on the Discovery of America," will be as good a one as we can get. I must now conclude, with entreating my Hobart to take care of himself, and in so doing to take care of me.

In every situation, whether adverse or fortunate, I shall never forget to subscribe myself, what I really am, my Hobart's dearest friend,

ROBERT M. FORSYTH.'

The editor is tempted here to add another letter of this amiable young man, which he found among the papers of one yet dearer to him than the subject of the present biography. It was addressed to one, who at the early age of ten years, had conveyed to him the simple-hearted expression of her pure regards. It is dated but a few weeks previous to his death, and will serve at least to show into what tone of character he was then ripening.

Augusta, April 6th, 1797.

My dear young friend's affectionate and acceptable favor was handed me a few days ago. To be thought worthy the esteem of any person, affords me great satisfaction. But when one for whom I feel a greater regard than I can express, honors me with her friendship, my heart overflows with the warmest gratitude. Believe me, dear Eliza, your letter excited indescribable sensations; the image of its author, virtuous, amiable,

and ripening to perfection, darted across my mind, and I anticipated with the greatest pleasure the time when she would be enjoying the rich harvest of her early labors.

Happy indeed was I to hear that you were improving yourself assiduously. Continue to do so, and you will always command the esteem and admiration of every good and virtuous mind.

The affectionate advice of your estimable mother renders all other superfluous. But in all your engagements, dear Eliza, forget not the great Author of your being. Then will you enjoy in this life uninterrupted pleasure, and in the world to come everlasting joy. The agreeable evenings I spent with you and your cousin Edmund, will always be remembered by me with delight. My attention to you is not entitled to any of your gratitude, for I can assure you I was more than rewarded by the pleasure I received. Be so kind as to remember me with affection to your mother, and accept for yourself the sincere and lasting esteem of your affectionate friend,

ROBERT M. FORSYTH.'

The following letters were called forth by the news of his death shortly after.

'Princeton, August 24th, 1797.

JOHN Y. NOEL, Esq., Savannah.

Sir,—Will you pardon the liberty a stranger takes in forcing himself upon your notice, and requesting a favor from you. The close friendship I formed at this place with the deceased R. M. Forsyth, deeply interests me in whatever relates to him. From the great distress

of his family at Augusta, the letters as yet received from thence contain no particulars of his last illness and death. In his correspondence with me, he informed me that he studied law in your office, and resided in your family, I am led to conclude, therefore, that you were the witness of his illness, and last moments. You will much alleviate the sorrow of afflicted friendship, if you will communicate to me particular information of his last sickness and death, and whatever else you may think interesting. The sensibility I feel relative to the most minute circumstances relating to him, must be my apology for requesting you to undertake this melancholy office. My knowledge of the kindness you have uniformly shown him, induces me to rely on the goodness of your heart for a compliance with my request, and be assured that it will be considered as a favor which will increase the respect and regard I shall cherish for the kind patron of my deceased friend.

I am, Sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN H. HOBART.'

'Princeton, August 18th, 1797.

My dear sister has no doubt seen from the paper, that her brother is called to another trial. He has again lost the object of a sincere and ardent affection. It seems as if I love with tenderness only to be made miserable by the loss of those I love. But my *idols* are taken from me. I am taught that this is not my home — that here are not my joys. Oh, if you knew with what tenderness and fidelity I have loved and been loved, however enthusiastic my language might be, you would judge it to be sincere. I have received from those here, who knew my affection for Forsyth, every

attention and kindness. If it should please Providence to give me resignation to his will, and to save me from depression of spirits, I feel inclined, with greater zeal than ever, to perform the duties of life, and while I am mindful of the uncertainty of its rational pleasures, to receive and enjoy them with humble thankfulness. Happy indeed should I be, under every loss, however severe, that I have still affectionate relations to whom I owe so much.

Your afflicted brother,

J. H. HOBART.

'Frankford Hill, August 22d, 1797.

You judge well, my dear brother, in assuring yourself of the entire sympathy of my heart in your present afflictive trial. I am sensible that the participation of grief, though soothing to the soul, avails little to lighten the weight of the blow. I need not present to you those motives of consolation which your own well-grounded piety will suggest, nor will it lessen the pangs of a heart like yours, to point out the grief which the unhappy mother of your deceased friend must experience; the first, when the burst of sorrow has subsided, will bring the consolation it never fails to impart, and the other consideration will be a spring of exertion to your own soul, to enable you to offer a support and comfort to hers. And I would entreat you, for the sake of your own dear parent, and those friends who tenderly love you, not to yield to that depression of spirits of which you speak; exert every faculty of your soul against that cruel languor into which it will sink you—that death to usefulness and active virtue. Alas! even in its happiest state, how many trials does this probationary being present to us, which nothing but an

early acquired fortitude, the result of a rational and well-grounded hope of a better life, can enable us to support. Let this, my dear brother, while it teaches you resignation, temper the fervor and ardency of those affections which, however amiable in themselves, will embitter too much your passing days, unless calmed by the full persuasion that they extend beyond the grave. They were given us by the eternal Author of our being, as sources of enjoyment and not misery, while we look for their full fruition only in a more exalted state of existence.

Ever your sympathizing sister,

R. SMITH.'

'Princeton, September 3d, 1797.

How shall I thank my dear sister for that affectionate sympathy and consolation which have contributed to restore peace to my mind. True, indeed, the participation of grief will not remove the heavy load, but the feeling heart that has itself been wounded, can speak with a tenderness that assuages the poignancy of sorrow, and is able to offer those bright hopes which were its own comfort and support. O, my sister, miserable indeed are those whom Heaven has gifted with sensibility, if death is to tear from them for ever the objects of their ardent and virtuous affection. If sensibility be not a crime, why should it be made our misery; and oh, what misery can be greater than that which accompanies the thought that we have parted for ever from those whom we love as our own souls. If this destiny awaits congenial spirits, whose hopes and enjoyments have here been bound together by mutual affection, enviable must appear to them the lot of the brutes, who

live without feeling and without hope. No, God who is love, eternal love, has not meant thus to sport with his creatures. He has given us virtuous feelings to be indulged, and he separates from us the objects of our affection only, that being less bound to this world we may love it less, and aspire more constantly after another, where we look for the full and perfect fruition of every virtuous feeling.

How precious in this light is the hope of immortality—to the wounded spirit what a balm does it apply. The resurrection of these frail and corruptible bodies to purity and glory becomes a truth consoling indeed, when we consider that in this perfect state we shall be reunited to those whom we have loved, in an indissoluble bond. Well might the Apostle in offering this truth to our faith say, “Comfort ye one another with these words.” Founded on this basis, my soul is at peace. Calm in the assurance that God is love, and seeks to conduct us by chastisement as well as mercy to his gracious favor and to an eternal rest, the gloomy prospect of life brightens for me, and even the dark valley of the shadow of death is enlivened by hope.

It has not been indeed without many doubts, and much anxiety, that my mind has become settled. I have been fearful that particular attachments strong as mine, were inconsistent with a sincere love to God, and therefore wrong; at the same time I felt they were deeply seated in my breast, and that my happiness was connected with their indulgence. But is not this an erroneous view of the perfections of God? Infinite in love and goodness, he has made us to be happy, and whatever contributes really to our happiness must be pleasing to him. The virtue, tenderness, and goodness

which excite sincere friendship, are his image in the soul, and therefore to love the creature is to love the adorable Creator. It is only a false love for the world, its honors and pleasures — it is only such an attachment to the creature as corrupts, instead of cherishing our virtuous feelings, that his holy law condemns. Or when virtuous affection fixes too fondly on its object, where it becomes so immoderate as to destroy our peace, or to make this life a place of reward instead of probation, and induces us to say with the disciples, "It is good for us to be here;" then a gracious Parent pities the weakness of his children; then by his merciful correction he leads them back to duty, and reminds them that they are to "live by faith;" faith in his goodness and wisdom, faith in his power and truth, who has promised a blessed and eternal inheritance beyond the grave. Yes, I feel that such views exalt and purify the soul, and fix it more firmly on the Divine faith and love. They bind it to God, thus infinite in goodness; they endear to it the gracious Redeemer, who by his sufferings and death has purchased for us eternal life, and opened the prospect of that full perfection of being which alone sheds consolation on this vale of tears. O if I could always have these bright views, how could I enjoy the world, and yet live above it; with what resignation and cheerfulness would I pass through my pilgrimage, be it long or short!

My dear sister, your affectionate brother,

J. H. HOBART.'

Whatever may be thought of the romantic fervor of this attachment, none can deny that it called forth emotions in the heart of the

survivor, that made it to him a noble and pure discipline ; nor would it be easy to find either in old or young, such emotions expressed with more truth and beauty. Two further letters remain to complete this interesting but painful picture ; they are from the widowed and all but childless mother.

' Augusta, August 20th, 1797.

It is to the beloved friend of my dear departed Robert that I now address myself. It is in answer to an affectionate and consoling letter, dated September 25th, and also to apologize for not replying to one of a former date, which was received with a melancholy but affectionate satisfaction. Your known goodness and sympathy of heart will, I know, excuse me for this omission, when I assure you it was from a desire of saving you pain as well as myself.

It is not for me to judge what is right in the sight of our heavenly Father, and I do not pretend to say but that I have suffered and still feel my loss, as an affectionate mother and frail mortal. But so far as my strength of faith is that he is happy, and that through the sufferings of our dear Redeemer we shall be made pure and fit for immortal bliss, and in God's good time be called to join his happy spirit, I am comforted and supported. That he has paid the debt of nature we must all discharge, before we can be admitted into the presence of a good and gracious God, and that at no time he would have been better able to give an account of the talents committed to his care than at the hour it was God's blessed will to call him, and that I know and

believe he had acted his part as a true believer ; — when I think on all this, I am almost ready to cry out with acclamations of joy, thanksgiving, and praise to the great and glorious LORD of all, that he has been pleased to take him to himself. When I consider the change for his good, I am perfectly resigned ; and I wait with anxious solicitude God's appointed time, when I shall be permitted to join the happy spirits of my dear departed friends.

Do not, my dear Hobart, believe that I would do any thing or omit a duty toward preserving a life that I consider as the gift of our heavenly Father ; no, believe me, it is foreign from the idea I have of submission to the decrees of the Supreme Ruler of the universe. My life is preserved for some wise purpose, I have no doubt, and when that purpose is fulfilled, I shall, I trust, be made a fit partaker of the heavenly feast. Oh how happy, how superlatively happy, I shall be ; and that you, my good and amiable Hobart, be permitted a seat in God's most holy and happy abode, to join in hymns of praise to his glory, honor, and majesty, for ever and ever, is the ardent prayer of your departed Robert's affectionate mother.

Let me now, my friend, address you on the subject of my surviving and beloved son, my dear Johnny. You tell me he is well, and that he has undergone an excellent examination. This to a mother, whose sole hope he is, was very pleasing information ; and although my anxiety to see him surpasses expression, I will, as you request, and as I had myself determined before I got your letter, deny myself the pleasure and happiness of his society for this winter ; but in the ensuing summer,

if I am so permitted by the wise decrees of Almighty Goodness, I promise myself the favor of his and your society for a short time, for I do not intend to interrupt his studies.

Your beloved Robert was born the 2d April, 1780, and departed this life 26th July, 1797: for the particulars of his death I must refer you to Mr. Noel; the revival of it creates in my breast inexpressible sensations, which my duty compels me, if possible, to suppress. He is gone; my beloved darling Robert is gone to everlasting peace and rest. Cherish, my Hobart, an affection for his family, and they will, I hope, endeavor to merit it.

Mrs. Armstrong, a beloved sister, joins me in affectionate wishes for your health and happiness. Please tender my respects to your amiable mamma and sister, and embrace with affection for me little Robert (Smith.) I need not assure you, my Hobart, it will always afford me the highest satisfaction to hear from you. My heart inclines to love you like my Robert.

Your sincerely affectionate,

FANNY FORSYTH.'

'Augusta, January 13th, 1798.

Dear Hobart,

I often call to mind the evening you were with my beloved Robert in my room at Princeton, and think it was too much happiness for a mortal long to enjoy, to behold a son, who was all a fond mother could wish, embraced by an amiable and beloved friend. O my Hobart, what would such a sight now afford me! But alas! vain thought: it is as impossible as the desire is

inconsistent with the true principles of a Christian. No, let me not look for such happiness again in a state of mortality, but rather let me expect from an endless eternity that reward our dear Redeemer has so wonderfully and bountifully purchased for us.

Oh, my friend, the struggles of a mother's heart are not yet subdued. I would not, however, have you think that they proceed from murmuring against the decrees of Providence. No, far from it: it is the struggles of nature for a darling son; not that depression of grief I have heard some express, but an animated desire to be with him in a state of true happiness. I feel the necessity of a humble, patient submission to Almighty greatness and goodness, and acknowledge whatever He decrees, though not permitted to know from what motive; yet whatever that decree is, it must be right. Under this impression, and a steadfast hope and trust in God's mercy, I look forward for the glorious reward, through our blessed and suffering Saviour, in the realms of everlasting happiness, there to join the spirits divine in singing hymns of praise to his adored name for ever. Amen.

This is the third time I have attempted to write you since the receipt of your last, and this is so blotted that I fear you will not be able to make sense out of it. My spirits are much cheered with the favorable account you give me of my only darling son John: I hope he may continue to give satisfaction, and merit the approbation of the worthy: he is dear to me, doubly so now.

You will oblige me by sending a copy of the inscription you had engraved on the tomb-stone: I shall read it with a melancholy but pleasing satisfaction. Fare-

well, my friend ; may you be happy, is the sincere wish of your departed Robert's affectionate mother,

FANNY FORSYTH.'

The monumental inscription here alluded to is not found among the papers of Bishop Hobart ; but the following obituary notice from the same pen is preserved, as published in the New-York 'Minerva.' It is worthy of insertion as a fair specimen of youthful talent, and still more worthy of record as showing that his Christian admonitions had not been fruitless.

'DIED,—On the 26th July, at Savannah, in the 18th year of his age, MR. ROBERT M. FORSYTH, eldest son of the late Major Forsyth, Marshal of the State of Georgia.

In this amiable young man were centered, in an eminent degree, those talents and virtues that excite respect and affection. A genius aspiring, correct, and capacious, was united with a heart feeling, affectionate, and benevolent.

Deprived, when only fourteen, by a particular act of Providence, of a beloved father, he rose to the trying duties of his situation ; and his most ardent wish was to pour consolation into the bosom of a widowed parent, and to watch with paternal solicitude over a young and only brother. Under the influence of these motives, he left home soon after the decease of his father, and commenced his studies at the college at Princeton. Here his youthful mind, opening with delight to instruction, comprehended even the highest and most abstruse prin-

ciples of science with unusual ease and accuracy. His talent for an eloquence that at once roused and melted the heart, was displayed on many public exhibitions at the college; but the most lively tribute was paid to its excellence by the tears and sympathy of a numerous audience on his pronouncing the valedictory oration at the last Commencement.

Noble and generous in his sentiments, ardent and faithful in his attachments, manly and graceful in his deportment, with a countenance that, speaking the energies of his soul, beamed with intelligence and feeling, he was admired and beloved by all who knew him. His soul was exalted by the exercises and hopes of religion. He embraced the glorious truths of the Gospel with a lively and rational faith, and made them his trust and his joy.

Thus in the prospect of discharging the duties of life with zeal and credit, and becoming an ornament to society, he was torn by an untimely death from the bosom of friendship. That Being who placed him in this state of trial, has in infinite wisdom closed his short pilgrimage and received him to a rest eternal in the heavens.

J. H. H.'

The only other letter that appears from this disconsolate mother, is of a date near two years after. It thus concludes :

'I thank you for the spectacles; they will be in demand this winter; my eyes begin to grow too weak to read much at night, but with their assistance I hope to be much edified by the perusal of some pious authors

which I have left me as the legacy of a beloved son. They will be read with the more attention, knowing them to be what he greatly valued. John informs me you have removed from Mr. Smith's: I hope it will be productive of as much happiness to you as the uncertain things of this world will admit; for real happiness is not to be found on this side the grave, and they are unwise who expect it.

Believe me, my dear Hobart, with great sincerity,
your affectionate friend, FANNY FORSYTH.'

It is consolatory to learn that the younger son thus left alone, as he succeeded to the virtues, so also did he to the affections of his brother in the heart of his friend, though difference of age here gave it more of a paternal character. If we may judge, however, from the following, his virtues were not without a tinge of indolence, although for the specific instance he might, doubtless, have pleaded an elder brother's example.

'Princeton, Thursday evening.

My dear Hobart,

Our friend Mercer when he left this engaged to ask you in my name to write an oration for the night before Commencement. The presence of my dearest mother, and the time I was called from my studies on that account, prevented me from preparing as well as I could wish, and as the examination fast approaches, I would like to have my oration as soon as possible. If you determine to write me one, and if you can possibly make it convenient, I wish you would send it up

next week. If you have not time to write one, you will gratify me by writing up immediately, and recommending me to one which you think will suit.

If it were not my own fault, I would scold you for not writing me often, but as it is owing to my own carelessness I cannot complain. I however promise to write frequently, provided you will set me the example. Nothing, believe me, gives me more pleasure than to read your letters, and the good advice contained in them. You, my dear Hobart, know my disposition, and must therefore make allowance for my carelessness.

Adieu, my dear Hobart, I shall expect to see you here this Commencement.

Your affectionate

JOHN FORSYTH.

But although the writer on this occasion forgot his Commencement speech, he never forgot his early friend. Years after, amid the turmoil of public life, the Hon. John Forsyth thus writes from Washington in answer to a letter of Bishop Hobart's : 'It is now, I believe, near ten years since I heard from you, although during that period I have been fortunate enough to hear much of you. The sight of your hand-writing excited in me a variety of emotions, among the strongest of which was gratitude for the kindness I had received from you in early life.' Of another early friend, who had in some degree supplied to young Hobart his brother's loss, the same letter gives

this spirited picture : ‘I saw Mercer on my way to the city of Washington ; he is in excellent health and spirits, full of life, and hope, and generous ambition.’

CHAPTER VI.

Family Letters—Sickness—Early Friends—Robertson—Grant—Scott.

BUT it is due to young Hobart, by the insertion of some other parts of his youthful correspondence, to show that no romantic friendship made him forgetful of nearer objects of affection, and the more serious duties of life. They carry back the reader, however, to a somewhat earlier date, and will bring again before him the painful story of severed friendship.

‘ Frankfort, 10th July, 1794.

My dear John will be pleased to hear we are all well here. I always thought this a delightful place, but find it beyond comparison more agreeable than ever. Mr. Smith seems happy to see every one pleased, and I am sure I have every reason to be satisfied with my situation. It gives me much pleasure to find you also are so agreeably situated with regard to your studies, but wish you in your attention to them to have regard to your health, by using proper exercise and relaxation, and not to deny yourself any reasonable and necessary refreshment that may be convenient.

I have no doubt of your economy, or the prudence of your conduct in every respect, and shall, therefore, with willingness for what depends on me, exert myself to contribute as far as in my power to your improvement. The children grow charmingly ; little Anna particularly is very sweet and lovely — sweeter than you can conceive. Robert would be so too if he would let one love him. Mr. S. and your sister join in love to you, with, my dear John,

Your affectionate mother,

H. HOBART.'

The call upon the militia to march against the western insurgents in what was then familiarly known as the whiskey rebellion, became soon after this a new source of anxiety to his mother. Her son-in-law had actually gone forth, her eldest son was called upon, and she feared for her youngest, the ' Benjamin ' of her declining age.

' Philadelphia, 15th September, 1794.

My mind is so agitated that I can scarce compose myself enough to write a line to my dear John, to tell you I want greatly to hear from you. I expect you are much engaged, and therefore would not wish you to take more time than for a few lines to inform me how you are, and whether there is any danger of you or any of the students of the college at Princeton being called out on military duty. Our city at this time seems to me to exhibit entirely a scene of confusion ; the noise of drums and fifes almost incessantly sounding in one's

ears, and the numbers in military array continually passing in every direction, excite in me no very pleasing reflections. Mr. Smith goes out to the camp with the horse on Wednesday. Your sister has been much distressed; but Mr. S. encourages her to hope that they will not have to go far, but that the insurgents will submit when they find a force coming against them. This hope at present keeps up her spirits in a degree, but I fear it will prove a fallacious opinion. I am entirely uncertain whether your brother goes or not; when he was with us at Frankfort, he said he would not go. I am so terrified when I think he may be persuaded to think he ought or may be obliged to go, that I dare not allow myself to dwell on the idea. With respect to you, my dear John, I hope I need not be apprehensive that you will be called on. You may be sure nothing could induce me to let you go. Let me know if there is any reason to be uneasy.

Your affectionate,

HANNAH HOBART.'

'Princeton, September 27th, 1794.

I have been very uneasy, my dear Mamma, at not being able to write you sooner, but the business and hurry of Commencement has prevented me. I wish you would try and ease yourself of the anxiety you feel, and that both you and sister would try and keep up your spirits. It is indeed unfortunate that it became necessary for Mr. Smith to leave his family and business; but as it is, so it is certainly our duty to submit. I have no idea there will be any bloodshed. As soon as the insurgents find there is a respectable force collected against them they will disperse. My dear Mamma

need not be under the least apprehensions on my account. The quota of militia required from this State is very small, not above 2000; it will be completed without difficulty, chiefly by volunteers; and even if there were any difficulty, there is no danger of my being called out, as I am not enrolled on the militia of this State.

Your apprehensions about the fever I would also hope will prove unfounded. We know how many false rumors are always circulating, and when this is the case, we think much of appearances which at other times would not be taken notice of. It seems improbable the fever should break out at this late season, when the warm weather is entirely past; and even if it should, such precautions would be used as would prevent its spreading: it would also be more under the power of medicine. The cases you mention were probably the common fall fever, which the fears of people have magnified into a contagious one. If, however, there is danger, I trust my dear Mamma will be as careful of herself as she is of me. You seem, on the contrary, anxious for me, but indifferent about yourself. It gives me great satisfaction to hear you are well, and I hope that while you are solicitous to keep me out of danger, you will, if there is any, avoid it yourself.

I feel much for dear sister; she must be very uneasy at the absence of Mr. Smith. I have not the least doubt, however, but what the troops will return safely in the course of a very short time.

I shall not misspend my time here. Indeed, it has passed very agreeably, independent of the improvement I may have derived. I feel the greatest attachment for a sweet youth here, Forsyth from Georgia. His pre-

sence makes amends for the absence of Skinner, whom I have not seen, as I expected, at the Commencement. My attachments are few, but they are very warm, and I often think I should be thankful that I enjoy as I do in the highest degree the pleasures of friendship. When my dear Mamma sees and knows my two friends she will not wonder that I love them. Give a great deal of love to sister. Kiss the dear children for me. I long to see the saucy Robert, and the sweet little Anna. You must be with sister as much as possible.

With much affection, yours, &c.

JOHN H. HOBART.'

' Princeton.

I have not written for this some time to my dear Mamma, but do not think of her the less often. Indeed, my happiness and means of improvement here continually remind me of you; for to you I am indebted for them all. I am not in immediate want of money, but whenever you can make it convenient to send me some, it will be acceptable; but I beg you will not put yourself to any inconvenience to do it. I should wish to pay Mrs. Knox as much as possible in advance. I feel myself under the greatest obligations to her. She treats me with the affectionate tenderness of a parent, and does every thing in her power that can tend to my convenience or comfort. She is considerably advanced in life, and from poor circumstances obliged to work very hard for her living. The students being all obliged to board in college, she has not a prospect of making out well. I wish it were in my power to make her situation every way easy and comfortable, and I know my dear Mamma will join me in this wish.

I have been thinking whether it would not be best for me to learn French this winter. I have more time now than I shall probably have at any future period. I wish you would let me know what you think best on this subject. Forsyth sends his love. My dear Mamma is not deceived in his amiable disposition, and I receive daily the strongest proofs of his affection.

Expecting to hear from you soon, I am your sincerely affectionate,

JOHN H. HOBART.'

As the next letter that appears in answer says nothing further of military dangers, it may be presumed the mother's fears were quieted on that score. His health, however, was still a subject of restless inquiry.

'Philadelphia, 22d December, 1794.

Your two letters, my dear John, were very acceptable, and it gives me great pleasure to find your situation so agreeable, with a prospect also of its being so advantageous with respect to your improvement. I miss you exceedingly, but the reflection and the hope that you will profit by it reconciles me to the separation; and you may be assured I am much more happy with such prospects in view, than I should be if you were with me, and without them. But, my dear John, mental advantages are not all that are to be considered, you should also have regard to your health, for without health there can be no enjoyment. Do not neglect to pay proper attention to that, and spare nothing that will contribute to preserve it; and if any thing should at any time ail you, do not neglect to attend to it in time.

It certainly would be my wish to have you with me if your improvement would be promoted by it; but when that cannot be, I must and do endeavor to reconcile myself to the separation with cheerfulness, and I am the better enabled to do this, when I remember that you have, in addition to the other advantages of your situation, the (I may say) maternal care and kindness of the worthy Mrs. Knox: indeed I feel great regard for her on account of her attention to you, and wish with you that her situation was more suited to her merits.

As I would, in every instance, do all I can to promote my dear John's advantage, I have no objection to your learning French, if it will not interfere with your other studies; but will it not interrupt and divide your attention, or oppress your mind by having too much to attend to? I mention this as what occurred to me. On considering it you will be better able to judge than I am; and if you conclude it best to engage in it now, and the teacher is a good one, you have my consent.

Remember me to your friend Forsyth. I feel attached to him for his affection to you, as well as for his amiable disposition and goodness of heart.

You may be assured, my dear John, you have continually the best wish and prayers of your affectionate mother,

H. HOBART.'

'Tuesday, 24th March, 1795.

I wished to have written to you, my dear John, immediately on the receipt of your last, enclosing the five dollar note. I am sorry you sent it, because though you might do without it then I know you cannot long, and I now return it to you. I wished to have added to

it, but cannot spare any now ; don't be uneasy about it, for I am not without. I have an entire confidence in my dear John's assurances of frugality and economy, but do not wish you to deny yourself any thing that is necessary for your comfort or convenience.

The sentiments of affectionate gratitude and duty contained in your letter could not but afford me much pleasure. My dear children's happiness has always been my first wish, and to know that they merit and enjoy happiness my highest gratification. I flatter myself, my dear John, that the advantages you have in your present situation will contribute much to promote yours, and to continue them to you nothing in my power shall be wanting, you may be assured.

You have not told me lately how your health is ; do let me know candidly : I hope in your attention to your studies, you have a regard to that ; as in my opinion it is one of our first duties to endeavor to preserve health. I think you have got a habit of stooping, particularly when reading or writing, I would wish you to avoid it as much as you can ; any posture that occasions a pressure on the breast must be hurtful.

That you may be preserved from every danger, is the prayer of, my dear John, your affectionate mother,

H. HOBART.'

The following letter would indicate that he had quitted the college as a resident graduate, and returned home previous to its date :

'Princeton, September 5th, 1795.

Friend Hobart,

Perhaps you have been made aware that Mr. English has for some time entertained thought of re-

signing the office he at present holds. He has declared his intention to this effect to Dr. Smith. Dr. S. has requested me to write to you, to know whether you would be willing to occupy his place. If so, an intimation of it as soon as possible will give him satisfaction. You are as well acquainted with the situation and the business, as you could be from having been only an observer. The advantages of it are by no means small, and you know my thoughts as to its inconveniences. In short, *feelings* are often concerned, but sooner or later this must be the case in life; and when we begin early to deal with others, we have the advantage of a gradual experience in coming into the world. But I need not tell you all this.

Yours, &c.

JOSEPH CALDWELL.*

'Philadelphia, 12th October, 1795.

I have received my dear John's letter of the 5th instant, but have been so engaged as not to have it in my power to answer it until now. When with me at Frankfort, you seemed so certain it would be a great advantage to you in your studies to be in the office which Mr. E. then proposed to resign, that I was perfectly satisfied you should accept of it; but as he now wishes to retain it, you cannot do otherwise, with propriety, than relinquish your intentions of accepting it. It will, to be sure, disappoint some of the plans you had laid down; but I hope it will not be necessary on that account to give up your residence at Princeton.

My dear John may be assured that nothing which

* Now President of the University of North-Carolina, at Chapel Hill.

depends upon me shall be withheld that may contribute to promote his improvement, as I shall, if necessary, submit to any temporary inconvenience myself, to insure a permanent advantage to you. I therefore wish you to be perfectly easy, and that you should adopt and pursue that plan which you feel convinced will most promote your happiness and advantage.

Your desire, my dear John, to be with me, cannot be stronger than mine to have you, if it could be equally advantageous to you; but the consideration that it cannot, has influenced me to the separation; but I look forward with hope that the time is approaching, though at a distance, when I shall be happy in your company, without the necessity of another separation. Providence, I trust, will provide for you, and indulge my anxious wishes to see my beloved child comfortably settled, where I can witness his happiness. * * * * *

[What follows relates to the death of young Skinner, intelligence of which, it would seem, his letter had communicated.]

I have much satisfaction, indeed, my dear John, in finding that your mind is in such a composed frame. Your distress has been great, I know, and I have felt much for you; but it is a comfort to me to find you are now so resigned, and I hope you will more and more experience the goodness of your heavenly Father in all his dispensations, and be enabled cheerfully to submit to his will. I shall be pleased to see the letters you mention when you have an opportunity.

In answer to your proposal of a visit to the family of your late friend at New-York, I doubt not they will be much pleased to see you, and I am convinced it will

give you great satisfaction to make the visit. I cannot, therefore, be unwilling you should take the journey, but would wish you to do it before the season is much farther advanced. It is a long way to travel in cold or bad weather, and so much water to pass, which I believe is frequently dangerous, that I shall be relieved from some anxiety when I know you are safe over it. You will inform me when you propose to go, and when you return. You have the best wishes and tenderest affection of yours,

H. HOBART.

N.B. I do not forget your friend Forsyth, though I do not always mention him ; tell him so.'

In the course of this winter he seems to have accepted, though amid many doubts, of the situation of college tutor.

From the cheerful tone of the following letter, we may judge that he had made a right decision : the ability to proffer aid to a mother who had straitened her own for his comforts, proving, to such a spirit as his, a sufficient reward for many labors.

' Princeton, March 12th, 1796.

I am as anxious to hear from my dear Mamma as I suppose you are from me. It is some time since I have written, as my engagements for these two weeks past have been considerably increased. Dr. Minto, the professor of mathematics, has been unwell all winter ; his duty hitherto has been performed by Mr. Caldwell, but has now devolved upon me. I have thus two classes

to attend, one of which is studying the mathematics, so that you see I am quite the man of business. My college duties take up *at present* nearly the whole of my time, but they are all highly necessary and improving. I should wish to attend to them, and perhaps the present is the most proper time for that purpose. In the course of the summer I hope to have made such proficiency in them as to be able to attend more immediately to divinity, though there is no part of my duty which is not improving, and no knowledge derived from it which I would not wish to gain. How glad I am I did not yield to the solicitations of old Dr. Smith,* and engage in his place. I should then have lost means of improvement which I should never have thought of without pain. This place has been, to use a common phrase, the making of me; I mean, whatever knowledge or ideas of improvement I now have, I have got here, and I have no fear that my opportunities of improvement will diminish.

I enjoy my health perfectly, and take more exercise than I did in the former part of the winter. I am in no want of money; I have received some from the treasurer. If Job Hughes has not paid you, and you are in want of money, let me know and I will send you some. I have not time to add more, but to send my love to all friends, and to offer my sincere prayers for the health and happiness of my dear Mamma.

Your affectionate

JOHN H. HOBART.'

' *Princeton, May 2, 1796.*

My dear Mamma will be pleased to hear of my safe arrival. My journey was tolerably pleasant, not so

* The Rev. Dr. Smith, of Philadelphia.

much so as it would have been with warmer weather. I found every thing in my trunk in good order. The gingerbread was very acceptable in itself, but doubly so as a proof of your solicitude for me even in trifles. I wish I could give some stronger expression of my feelings, when I reflect on your tender and constant anxiety for me, than mere words. But I trust Providence will give you that reward which I cannot.

I found my room-mates in good health, and pleased to see me. It gratifies me to receive from all with whom I am here connected, proofs of their esteem for me, and from some of more than esteem. I know no greater happiness than that of being beloved, especially by those who are the objects of one's affection; and here in the college, where the selfish principles of the world are, I may say, unknown, there is nothing to control the feelings of sincere affection. I am hardly yet fixed to study; to-morrow I expect to begin in earnest, and to enjoy my usual happiness when thus engaged; and when my dear Mamma knows that I am happy, I hope she will be so too. That this may always be the case, is the prayer of her sincerely affectionate son,

JOHN H. HOBART.'

' May 3d, 1796, Tuesday.

I had just sat down to write to you, my dear John, when I received your welcome letter. It gives me much pleasure to hear you got safe up, and were so affectionately received by your friends and companions; and you may be assured the sentiments of gratitude and affection to me expressed in your letter are exceedingly gratifying, as I know they are sincere. To have my children's affection, and to be certain they deserve mine, and are

happy, affords me the highest enjoyment when separated from them.

That you, my dear John, may continue to experience the peculiar favor of a kind Providence, (and I know you will not be unthankful for it,) is the sincere prayer of your ever affectionate mother,

H. HOBART.'

The warm attachment of his associates here alluded to appears in a joint letter about this date from two of his friends. Burnet, the one who concludes it, says, 'Your good friend, whose hand you will here recognise with pleasure, has just left me. While here, he accidentally saw your little trunk in one corner of the room, and actually manifested as much joy at the sight of it as if it had been an old friend.'

The following letter is from young Robertson, the same from whose pen a sketch has already been given.

'Philadelphia, April 7th, 1796.

My dear John,

It was with much pleasure I received your letter yesterday, after so long a silence. I have been expecting one for some time, and I need not tell you how much it would have gratified me, but I have felt confident it was to your engagements only I owed my disappointment.

It was to be expected that your present station would require much of your attention, and proper that it

should; but when by it, together with your own studies, your whole time is engrossed, it cannot be very agreeable, and to be obliged in some degree to neglect your friends not the least unpleasant circumstance with which it is attended. I sincerely wish some alteration may take place, not only because I may then expect to be favored oftener with your letters, but because I think it would be more for your happiness. I have often intended writing since I last saw you, and I know you will believe me when I say it was not your silence that prevented me.

The debates in Congress have lately been very interesting. While the eloquence and abilities displayed on this occasion reflect, as you observe, honor on the minority, the late decision is little to the credit of the House. There has not been a subject* before Congress since the establishment of the government, in which one party has had so decidedly the advantage; but with men who had made up their minds to resist conviction, it would be vain to expect that reasoning, however irresistible, would have any effect. No doubt a number of the majority gave their vote from a mistaken judgment; but it is no breach of charity to say that a Baldwin and a Madison have not that apology.

The conduct of the President on this as former occasions, must meet the approbation of every good man, and shows clearly that nothing but the dictates of conscience influence him. His message was yesterday taken into consideration, and the business begun by a *lengthy* speech from Mr. Madison, the substance of which was, "the reasons assigned by the President for

* Mr. Jay's treaty with Great Britain.

refusing the papers were not sufficient, nor his construction of the constitution just." He, however, admitted that the President had a right to refuse the papers.

It is the wish of that party now, and I suppose they will succeed, to have their opinions relative to the treaty-making power inserted on the journals of the House. This appears by a resolution now on the table, and is in substance the same with one laid on the table a few days ago by Mr. Kitchell, which I suppose you have seen.

I am affectionately yours,

J. ROBERTSON.'

If the excitement of politics could arouse the quiet merchant, no wonder that the more excitable student caught the infection, and taking advantage of some interval of duty, or some friendly aid, he hurried up to town to enjoy the feast of eloquence of which he heard so much. His visit was happily timed; he found himself in Philadelphia, in the House of Representatives, on the twenty-fourth of this same month, when Fisher Ames delivered his memorable speech on the subject of the British treaty. The impression made upon the mind of a hearer, ardent as the speaker himself, may be judged of from the fact of his sitting down, on retiring from the House, and putting on paper his vivid recollections of that celebrated burst of impassioned eloquence. This proof

of sensibility and talent is preserved among his papers, endorsed as follows: 'Sketch of Mr. Ames' Speech on the subject of the British Treaty in the House of Representatives, taken from memory, 1796.' It closes thus: 'Mr. Ames in conclusion observed, that enfeebled as he was by disease, vacant as his mind then was of ideas, and deprived as he felt he was of the power of collecting them, he expected to have given a silent vote, and supposed that any desire he might have of speaking was controlled by a commanding necessity; but when he advanced to the precipice of that abyss, which if not fathomless was yet inexorable, he felt desirous to protract, if it were only for half an hour, a decision which was to plunge them all into it. Personally he felt little interested in the event of the vote; his hold of life would probably not last till the fatal disasters of the rejection of the treaty would come upon his country. But he felt for posterity, and for them he spoke.'

In the autumn of this year, (1796,) Mr. Hobart's health was seriously threatened; the cause, however, seems to have been rather mental than bodily. A despondency which,—whether the result of highly excited feelings, or, what is more probable, of over wrought faculties, in the double task of teacher and

student,—broke down his powers, awakened for a time in the minds of his friends, and still more in that of his foreboding mother, the most anxious solicitude. In this state he returned home, where, under the blessing of God, relaxation and domestic affection soon wrought their usual happy result.

The following affectionate letter met him on his return, from an old college friend, one who had gone before him in the labors of the ministry, though in another Church.

'New-York, November 14th, 1796.

Dear Hobart,

It grieves me that I have been obliged to neglect so long the answering of your affectionate letter. But hear me. I attended punctually at the post-office till the day I went to New-York, which must have been the day your letter reached New-Brunswick. I did not receive it until a week after by the return of the boat, and then it was on a bed of sickness, and I now devote my first composed moments to answer for my apparent negligence, which must have been unaccountable to one in your situation.

By this time, I presume, you have returned to Princeton, and I earnestly pray that it may be with a mind strengthened and composed, and your malady overcome in a great measure — complete recovery must be a work of time. Just now, dear John, I may be but a poor adviser, till made better acquainted with the progress of your recovery. I long to see and converse with you, and shall haste to pay you a visit on my return to New-

Brunswick, which will be in a week or fortnight at farthest. Your Robert has been with you to Philadelphia. I know he has been attentive and affectionate, but I imagine he has had to return before you to prepare for his office. At such times you are apt to be anxious and melancholy; this should not be, my dear Hobart. You have sometimes told me, that in the depth of your distress and debility of mind, when you have heard your Robert praised, when you have seen his ease and propriety of behavior in company, different you thought from your own, you have often experienced dark and envious feelings. Believe me, my dear friend, I attribute this to the weak state of your body and mind, for friendship delights in the superior excellence of its friend, at the same time that it labors to become equally excellent; and your noble soul is, I know, capable of the purest friendship. When you can act yourself, none have better talents to excel, none dispositions more inclinable to virtue. You have uncommon judgment and foresight in most things. When you converse there is an air of candor and sincerity, with a firmness and becoming warmth in the support of truth, which commands at once love and respect from the discerning, and a mildness and benevolence of temper, discoverable even on a short acquaintance, which must attract universal regard. You have also a strength of mind (notwithstanding its present weakness) which displays itself in uncommon resolution and perseverance in the pursuit of knowledge, and in the performance of duty. Witness your government in the college with a mixture of mildness and firmness which has gained the affections of every worthy student. Did I not know this was truth, and that you can bear it, I would not dare to say so much to any

person concerning himself, but I know my John too well to think that this will have any other than a good effect.

Shall I say why I have thus told you what I think of you? It is to encourage—to exhort you. Your very endeavors to be cheerful will counteract in a measure the influence of melancholy thoughts. Whenever, therefore, you find your spirits grow dull, and feel inclined to indulge anxious and foreboding thought, do any thing; start up, walk, talk, by some means or other divert your attention; use every exertion, every power of body and mind to counteract your malady, and give not up to despairing thoughts; and then I hope, yea, I have a strong confidence, that your God will preserve you from going down to the pit, will make you an honor and a blessing to the Church of CHRIST and to society, and at last will receive you to an inheritance incorruptible and that fadeth not away. Trust, then, in God, and you shall yet praise him; make him the strength and chief confidence of your heart, and he will be your portion for ever. My heart longs for—it goes out to God in hearty wishes and prayers for your recovery and prosperity, that you may be enabled to exert all your abilities in the service of God, and that you may experience the joys and comforts of religion. I have a great deal to say; my heart is full whenever I am writing, thinking, or speaking of you. * * * *

Dr. Minto is dead. Dear good man, he has gone to the enjoyment of the saints in bliss. What a loss to society; to Nassau Hall it will be almost irreparable. I have been revolving in my mind who will supply his place, but can fix upon no one. I long to be at Princeton, and will be there soon. I feel interested in all the

concerns of that place ; I have past, I may say, almost the happiest hours of my life in it, but find it impracticable to reside there again. The good Mrs. Knox and Miss Sally I hope are well : they were my sincere friends, and I feel much gratitude to them for their kind, yes, tender usage of me. Remember me with affection to them ; also to Cunningham, Comfort, How, Mercer, Hughes and Watson, my Mapleton friends, when you see them, and all whom I should not forget, for my heart is big with good wishes to all my Princeton friends ; and you, my dear Hobart, next to my nearest connections, possess the first place in my affections. Believe me to be your hearty well-wisher, and rank among the tenderest of your friends, your

EBENEZER GRANT.'

On the same sheet, he thus writes to the young companion of his desponding friend :

' My dear Robert,

Think not I have forgotten you, or that you are last remembered by being addressed last, for indeed you have a great share of my sincere regard. My Robert, you are entering early on the stage of action ; you have many and important trusts committed to you, and you have abilities adequate to the discharge of them. You have by this time probably entered on the office of teaching others, almost as soon as you have ceased to be a scholar yourself ; this is a task which will require much prudence and firmness, but with exertion I feel confident you will succeed. Your dear John, who has been in many instances as a guardian angel, will be a wise counsellor to you. Love him, my dear Robert,

with all the affection you can give. Soothe him in his melancholy; then I have no doubt but that you will be great and happy together. May the LORD bless and prosper you, ye true friends. Think often on him, who can subscribe himself, from the bottom of his heart, your friend,

E. GRANT.'

The promised visit to Princeton did not take place. On 10th December, this truly sympathizing friend thus again writes :

'New-Brunswick, 10th December, 1796.

Dear John,

You no doubt concluded from my letter that I should have paid you a visit before this time, and this has, I trust, been the reason why I have not received a line from you. Monday, 28th, I had fixed upon for it, but many causes have hitherto prevented me. In the mean time I should be much pleased to receive from you a favorable account of your health, both of body and mind. For your comfort I cannot help but say, that often after I have besought the LORD to have mercy on myself and you, I have felt a kind of enthusiastic confidence that he would subdue your malady, would recruit your strength, would raise you to honor and usefulness in life, and to a seat at his right hand for ever. Despair not, then, of his goodness, my dear John; his thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways. Our duty is submission of the whole heart to the disposals of his providence. Afflictions come not from the ground; they are not unprofitable to the children of God; they are not more frequently evidences of his

displeasure than they are merciful visitations to lead us to unfeigned repentance for sin, and to a closer walk with God.

Write me, my friend, of your arrangements for the present session; of your difficulties and your satisfactions: any thing that concerns you interests me. How is your Robert pleased with his situation, and how are you yourself and the students pleased with him in the execution of his office? Does he begin to form a steady decided character? If so, he will meet my earnest hopes of his one day becoming a great and good man.

My father grows very infirm, and his eyes are dangerously affected. Should he lose his sight, all methods of information will be taken from him. He says he has tasted all the happiness this world can afford, and longs to depart for another and a better. My mother has taken a great liking to you only from description. She joins me in wishing to see and converse with you. Although our house, under the present circumstances of our family, cannot furnish all the accommodation I could wish for a friend, yet you especially, or any of my Princeton friends, may always expect to receive a hearty welcome from,

Yours, &c.,

EBEN. GRANT.'

It would be enlarging too much on the details of early life, and perhaps on the feelings of living friends, to give more of this correspondence; suffice it to say, that young Hobart, while attached to a chosen few, made himself a friend to many, and was beloved by all. His heart was ample as it was warm, and

no individual seems ever to have approached him, who either needed sympathy or sought aid, without receiving one or both. On some, the impression for good was permanent; on others, no doubt, transient; all, however, speak of him in terms of warm regard. ‘Dear Hobart,’ says one, of whom a parting letter is incidentally preserved, ‘both Mr. Hughes and myself are under great obligations to you. We would wish now, and always, to feel them strongly, and to acknowledge them. When I think how highly I was honored, and how much I was benefited by your friendship, I can scarcely restrain tears.’ The language of another very youthful student is too simple and heartfelt not to be given at length. His affectionate gratitude gives a pleasing picture of the intercourse that subsisted between them. They carry back, however, the narrative to an earlier date.

‘*Princeton, November 6th, 1794.*

My dear Friend,

I arrived here last evening from Brunswick, and found Forsyth’s patience in waiting for me almost exhausted; but upon hearing the reasons of my delay he was fully satisfied.

This day we took possession, by leave of Mr. Finley, of our room. It is to be sure not a very warm one for the winter; but the idea of your coming to live with us

makes me much more contented and satisfied than I would be in the best room in the college without you. We have both, I trust, set down with a full determination to apply diligently to our studies, and by our conduct to make ourselves worthy the esteem of the faculty, and more particularly of yours, worthy friend.

The salutary advice you have and, I doubt not, will continue to give me, I pray Heaven may not be thrown away, but rather that I may employ it to the good of myself and friend. Thanks be to that God, who knows our hearts and sees all our deeds, that I have been so happy in gaining for myself so good, so amiable, and so generous a friend to keep my erring feet in right paths, and to lay a firm and lasting foundation for my temporal and eternal happiness. You have always shown a partiality for me, and I know not why even this. Your regard for me while I was an entire stranger among the students, and your very often repeated acts of friendship toward me; these, independent of your real merit, of which I then had but a slight knowledge, could not fail to enkindle in me the liveliest sparks of true and genuine esteem. But why should I tell you that I feel an attachment for you beyond what I can express? sure I have told you that I esteem you my best, my worthiest friend.

I shall expect you, dear friend, in a fortnight or three weeks at farthest; the sooner you come, the sooner you will give satisfaction and pleasure to Forsyth and myself. I hoped, when I arrived from Philadelphia here, to have been happy in acquainting you with your mother's good health, and friends', but when I came you had gone to Philadelphia.

Praying that you may, as no doubt you will, receive the reward of your excelling merit in this world, and after this transitory existence be received into the paradise above, and receive the crown of glory prepared for all who believe, I subscribe myself,

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

JOSEPH WARREN SCOTT.

N. B. Forsyth last night received your letter, but no entreaties on my part could prevail on him to read it to me.'

'Nassau Hall, Princeton, November 15th, 1794.

My dear Friend,

Yours of the 10th instant I received on Tuesday, and enjoyed more satisfaction than I can express to you in the perusal of it. Forsyth also received one last evening, and read to me a clause from it, which he said was addressed to both of us. Though this intimate correspondence affords a great deal of pleasure, your immediate presence would give me more.

Your advice, my dear friend, I assure you, is always acceptable, because I know it is always good. Yet I cannot divine why you are so very urgent with us about keeping the door shut. I am apprehensive you think we have a great many intruders, and in this I wish to undeceive you, because I know whatever we do right gives you pleasure. At first the students came in great numbers, and our refusing admittance to so many daily occasioned complaint against us; but we persisted in what you had taught us, and what we thought of ourselves was right, and by so doing, at length freed ourselves from a great many visiters that we did not want.

The conduct that I mentioned in my last I meant to pursue toward the college in general, and my fellow Whigs in particular, (provided it met with your approbation,) I mean still to maintain till I hear otherwise from you.

The return of Mr. Smith* I wait with impatience; I hope it will not be more than three or four days, and that you will be here in a week at farthest. It is hardly fair to tell tales, but to-day a circumstance took place which I am sure will make you smile. * * * *

I must also complain a little on Robert (Forsyth) about copying the old minutes. He has not written a word until this afternoon, but for the future I hope he will do better; but you must not *lash* him too severely, as I believe I am almost as much in fault as he is, for not telling him more frequently of it.

My fingers are so cold that I can hardly write any more. I remain, and wish ever to remain, your sincere and affectionate friend,

JOSEPH WARREN SCOTT.

N. B. I shall expect a letter very shortly, and a long one too.'

' Nassau Hall, Princeton, November 17th.

My dear Friend,

What melancholy tidings does this bear? It is the death of our good and worthy president, (Dr. Witherspoon.) On Saturday evening, in his chair, this good old man met the last common enemy of man with joy and cheerfulness. And why should he not? It would set a final period to trouble and suffering, and

* Mr. Hobart's brother-in-law, whose absence prevented his return to college.

land him in that haven of eternal peace, where is the reward of his labors and fidelity to his Master's trust.

Full of days, and full of honors, this venerable sage has left us to deplore his loss as a father and protector; but he has also left us an example truly worthy to be imitated. To-morrow his body is to be committed to the silent grave. Dr. Smith is, I believe, to pronounce a funeral sermon; no doubt it will be a moving and feeling discourse.

My dear friend, I must really ask you why you neglect to write to me. You know nothing gives me more pleasure, when I cannot see you. Why then will you voluntarily rob me of so much happiness?

This is but a short letter, but it is almost prayer-time, and therefore I cannot continue it. I remain, my dear Hobart, your friend, and to continue so.

JOSEPH WARREN SCOTT.'

' *Nassau Hall, November 27th, 1794.*

My dear Friend,

In what manner to apologize for my great neglect in not writing to one who has ever shown toward me kindness far beyond what I deserve, and to whom I have every reason to believe my letters are always acceptable, I know not, especially as I regard you as one for whom I ought, and I hope do feel a tie stronger than that alone which worth can inspire. I feel proud of such a friend, and at the same time am conscious that it is, and no doubt will be, an honor to me in whatever station I am placed by Providence; but I have been expecting you daily, and therefore delayed till the present time. Indeed, I supposed that even if I were not to write, that would be no hindrance to you; for

you may well know, even if I do not write frequently to you, (as I confess I have neglected to do,) my thoughts are oftentimes employed with you, anticipating the time when I shall see you again, and know that you will live with me.

Forsyth just now received a letter from you. I read in his countenance marks of pleasure which could not fail of producing the same sensations in me, though arising from a different cause.

I received a letter a few days ago from Terhune; he expects that you will write him immediately, directing your letters to Gravesend; but I must study at my lesson, for *that* I cannot put off. Therefore, I bid you good night, after subscribing myself,

Your sincere friend,

JOSEPH WARREN SCOTT.

P. S. I was just in Mr. Caldwell's room, and told him I was going to write to you: he requested me to present his respects, with the following message, viz. "If you are coming be expeditious, or otherwise we will not have a sufficient barrier against infidelity, which is spreading its dominion far and wide." This stroke, I apprehend, is meant for me. He knows that I have been reading Hume, and is frequently giving me sharp strokes about my belief. I have said that I thought reading the above-named author rendered a person less bigoted: Caldwell from this supposes that I believe all that is said by Hume. Mr. Finley is often questioning me about your coming, when it will be; he seems impatiently expecting it.

Your affectionate friend,

WARREN.'

' Nassau Hall, December 4.

My dear Friend,

I just now received your inexplicable letter of the 3d instant, by Dickson. However, all your letter I can understand better than that which relates to infidelity. I thought I might mention to you in trust the lecture I got from Caldwell on account of my reading Hume, and the reason why I continued reading it, because I thought it made me more candid in my judgments. When you come I shall have a better opportunity of showing you that I am in no way related to infidelity, only not bigoted. That part of your letter which relates to my studies I shall endeavor to profit from in future, though altogether to keep my thoughts at home would be disagreeable to my feelings. Forsyth and I live very agreeably now. When you come we shall be happy; to both of us you are a safe resort when advice is required, and both you have shown yourself willing to assist whenever in your power. My dear friend, your presence I very much wish for. Mr. Caldwell expresses a great desire to see you; he by this sends his respects to you. Come, dear friend, your friends are impatiently expecting you. Write to me quickly if you do not come.

Adieu, my dear friend.

JOSEPH WARREN SCOTT.

P. S. I should be ashamed to let such a letter be seen: then I request you only to read it.'

The last letter from this warm-hearted youth is from New-Brunswick, New-Jersey, though without date, except 'Sunday Morning: ' its P. S., without which he seems never to have written, is in these words :

‘P.S. Show this letter to Forsyth; tell him that I very often think of him, and of the happy hours we have spent together, and in vain wish them to return. I shall once more lay claim to your correspondence, though I see you have entirely forgotten me; but, Hobart, whatever has been my conduct, whatever my appearance, be assured I never have suffered a diminution of that affection which you know I once cherished for you. Tell Forsyth to write to me. Adieu.

J. W. Scott.’

On the superscription is added,

‘If Mr. Hobart is not at Princeton, Mr. R. M. Forsyth is requested to take this and open it.

J. W. S.’

Similar feelings of personal attachment were excited in the young class whose charge Mr. H. undertook after his return to college, while his own toward them are sufficiently marked in his careful preservation of their parting address.

It begins in these words:—‘We cannot, Sir, see the time approaching when you are to leave us, without testifying in strong terms our regret, and the deep sense of gratitude impressed upon us. We shall long remember that period of youth spent under your care,’ &c.

This affectionate farewell was found among the Bishop’s papers at his death. A heart like his valued such records, and in his careful preservation of them we read one of the peculiarly

attractive traits of his character. ‘When he became a man,’ he put not away all childish things. The warm and tender heart never left him, and as relics he prized all its early reminiscences. Indeed, throughout life he was sensitive as an infant to every mark of kindness, while coldness or ingratitude seemed to cut him to the heart. Amid all the bustle of life, and the cares of a most busy station, whatever addressed itself to his feelings was instantly uppermost in look, word, and action: the ‘child’ was awakened within him, and its ready language of smiles and tears, and the affectionate embrace proved how little change years, or the world, had wrought upon his affectionate, sensitive nature.

CHAPTER VII.

Change of Destination—Enters a Counting-house—Call to a Tutorship at Princeton — Removal — Duties — Companions — Intimacy with Young Mercer—Letters.

BUT this history of early friendship has led the narrative beyond the date of events to which it is necessary now to recur. The first appearance of the yellow fever in Philadelphia, in 1793, dispersed, as already mentioned, not

only the inhabitants of the city, but the students of Princeton, and left young Hobart not only without his anticipated honors, but even without a home. The consternation produced by this then unknown pestilence, for it was its first appearance in our country, is forcibly painted in some of his letters. Believed to be infectious as the plague, all fled from it in horror. Three-fourths of the population of Philadelphia are described as abandoning their homes ; all business suspended, all ordinary ties broken through, and none remaining in the devoted city but wretched sufferers, and the still more wretched friends with whom love was stronger than death, or those noble few whom a high sense of professional duty held around them ; while its peopled streets are described as either deserted, or frequented by such only as sought gain or plunder amid the dying and the dead.

Such is the fearful picture given by young Hobart to his friend Skinner, while urging him to awake up to seriousness upon such a call,—admonitions which acquire a solemn value from the reflection that it was to this very pestilence this amiable young man was soon to fall a victim. After parting at college, these friends met once again before their final separation. This is the visit already mentioned, which

young Hobart paid to Skinner at his father's residence on Long-Island, making friends, as it seemed, of the whole family, by his warm kind-heartedness, even down to 'little negro Jack,' who, as a subsequent letter mentions, often spoke of his absence 'with great lamentation.' But on his friend's mind that absence caused a more lasting and rational sorrow. 'In being deprived of my dear John,' says he, 'I not only lose a friend, but one of the most powerful human means of my salvation, for I now see the necessity of becoming not only virtuous, but a professor of a true faith. This I shall aim to become, and by the grace of God, through his Son, do I hope to be successful; that this may be the case shall be my earnest prayer. To die, to a sinner is death indeed, but to a good man is a happy hour; and this shows us the necessity of being at all times ready to meet that Judge before whom sinners tremble.'

Among those who fled from the pestilence in Philadelphia, were Mrs. Hobart and her daughter Mrs. Smith, with her family. Her son, as already mentioned, joined them at Frankfort, Pennsylvania, where he found his brother-in-law temporarily established in the same mercantile business from which he had been driven in the city. What motives were here urged or

of themselves operated to induce young Hobart to enter the counting-house, it is not easy to say. He speaks indeed of 'the wishes of friends, and several other circumstances,' but what those were we are left to conjecture; most probably the narrow means of his mother, and the prospect of a speedier independence for her relief: but however right the motive, it was unquestionably a wrong decision; an employment in which not only his peculiar talents would have been wholly lost, but one for which he wanted even that single talent which is essential to secure success. An economist in money matters, Mr. Hobart neither was nor ever could have been made: he was too much the creature of impulse, and that impulse had in it too much of warm-hearted sympathy, for a prudent estimate of money. In his own personal expenses he was rather indifferent than frugal, while to others his hand like his heart was ever freely open. 'From his boyhood,' says Professor McLean, of Princeton, 'this was his characteristic trait.'

That a sense of duty, therefore, rather than choice led to this selection, is sufficiently evident; this too appears from his letters: 'At length, my dear White,' says he, in one about this period, 'the close of my collegiate studies has ushered me into the laborious and

humble station of a merchant's apprentice. The change is too great for me as yet to rejoice at it ; nor have my present engagements and amusements effaced the remembrance of those I enjoyed at college. In truth, my friend, those were the happiest that have yet fallen to my lot ; and accuse me not of insensibility to the pleasures of life, if I tell you that the anticipation of my future probable course stamps a yet higher value on them.'

But the counting-house could not separate him from his brother Whigs, whose interests and pursuits, however remote from his own, were dear to him as ever. His letters to Princeton are filled with advice and exhortations calculated to direct or arouse them to guard well the palm of academic victory they had won. The following is a specimen.

' *Philadelphia, December 9th, 1793.*

My dear Tom,

By this tender though familiar appellation I address you ; by it I distinguished you when my fellow-student and room-mate, and the remembrance of college scenes and engagements I wish never to lose. This very moment, while engaged in realizing the happy scenes which college once presented, a gloom overspreads my mind. *You* will not ask wherefore ? But yet I take pleasure in reviewing them. Strange constitution of the human mind ! but no less wise than strange ; for the exercise of those feelings ennobles man, renders him

alive to the wants and sorrows of his fellow-creatures, and endears the man of sensibility as the instrument of happiness, and the object of love, veneration, and gratitude. But, my dear Tom, I should not dwell on the subject of my separation from college, did I not take pleasure in indulging and expressing such thoughts to one whose heart is alive to many tender feelings.

* * * * *

It is with singular satisfaction I learn from your letter, that the society is likely to maintain its respectability, and which the honorable exertions of the members will always secure to it. For this reason I am glad to find that those who have already become Whigs, are young men of sound judgment and good moral character. May you have many such! I know it will prosper if its members cherish a warm and disinterested attachment to its welfare. This will give rise to diligence, unanimity, friendship, and every other virtue which can advance its honor. Diligent attention to the exercises, caution in making innovations, and coolness and deliberation in determining on measures,—these are, I am well satisfied, particularly necessary to the internal concord and peace of the institution.

Yours, &c.

J. H. HOBART.

To one of the new members he writes as follows : it is his first letter to young Scott, of whom mention has already been made.

' Philadelphia, June 17th, 1794.

My dear Warren,

Perhaps you may be a little surprised at hearing from me. Though on your entrance into college I was

a stranger to you, yet you showed for me an esteem and affection which in the same situation I have experienced from few, and I should think myself possessed of a strange insensibility, if your expression of attachment to me did not excite in my breast a corresponding emotion.

Whenever I have had an opportunity I have inquired after you, and it has given me the greatest pleasure to hear of the honorable character you have maintained in your class. I have no doubt but what you are able, and I hope will continue to preserve this character; for I am persuaded you will derive the greatest satisfaction from a reflection on the proficiency you have made, and the consciousness of being the object of esteem with those under whose care you are placed, and who will always take pleasure in rewarding merit.

The period of life at which you are is very important; every moment of time is valuable. Your fortune, honor, respectability, and happiness as a man, depend upon the proper improvement of your present advantages. But this, it may be, is not a new idea. You have, doubtless, often heard it, and certainly act under it more than many who are your superiors in age and experience. Yet still you cannot too often think of the value of time, and the necessity of early acquiring habits of attention and diligence. I am sure you must derive a great deal of pleasure and improvement from the Society. Attention to your duties there will exercise your judgment, and greatly advance your progress in literature. I am sure you must feel an attachment to it. Ardently then pursue its interests. When called upon to act in any office, seek carefully and attentively for what is your duty, and then let no con-

sideration of popularity, no fear of offending, deter you from the performance of it. By this conduct you will in the end gain reputation, beside enjoying the approbation of your own mind. Let prudence, perseverance, calmness, and judgment, mark all your actions, and I have no doubt but what you will advance the honor and prosperity of the institution. It is worthy of your warmest attachment, and demands your most zealous endeavors. * * * * *

I am much pleased, my dear Warren, to hear that you are to have an opportunity of doing so on the 4th July, and I have no doubt, my dear boy, but what you will be successful. It will give me pleasure to hear from you when you have leisure; and believe that I remain with affection, my dear Warren,

Your sincere friend,

J. H. HOBART.'

With such thoughts uppermost in his mind, it is not to be wondered at that his mercantile occupations soon became distasteful. He gave them, however, a fair trial. As inclination had not led him to this course of life, so neither did he allow want of inclination to drive him from it, and returning with Mr. Smith to Philadelphia, as soon as safety permitted, he devoted himself to the duties of the counting-house, through the ensuing winter, with all his constitutional ardor. But nature and education united were too strong for him, so that even his brother-in-law writes to a friend,

‘John does not discover any talents for a mercantile life ; his taste and views are all decidedly literary.’ We are not surprised, therefore, to find him, after a few months, in a letter to a young friend, holding this language : ‘I am tired of the mercantile business, or rather I feel a greater inclination for something else. It is so serious I cannot tell it you now.’ What this preference was may easily be conjectured ; to his friend Skinner he freely unbosomed himself. ‘How I should rejoice,’ says he, ‘were we both to embrace, from pure and holy views, that sacred office, in which if we faithfully performed our duty on earth, we should enjoy the greatest happiness here, and hereafter shine as stars in the firmament of heaven.’

But still it was with fear and trembling he took up the resolution. In a letter of June 16th, 1794, he observes : ‘I still have in view the ministry. O what an awful undertaking ! I am afraid that my motives for it are not sufficiently pure ; that I have not sufficiently in view the sacred ends for which it was instituted—the turning of many to repentance, and building them up in the faith of God and of a blessed Saviour. But I hope that God, for CHRIST’s sake, will bless me, and that he will make me in his hands, the

humble instrument of turning many to righteousness.' In a subsequent one of October 21st, he repeats his fears: 'My views still continue the same with respect to my profession. I am anxious to engage in the ministry, but I am afraid I have not a proper sense of the importance of the duties connected with it, or of the qualifications it requires. In the latter I know I am deficient. I daily become more sensible, to use a scriptural and very just expression, with "the plague of my own heart." "It is, indeed, deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." It is useless indeed for me to lament this, while exertion on my part is wanting. Yet I rejoice that CHRIST has made a sufficient atonement for my sins, and that through faith in him the chief of sinners may be reconciled to God. In this character would I seek a merciful God, and beseech him, by the merits and atonement of his crucified Son, to pardon my sins, to rectify my nature, to subdue the power of sin within me, and to make me holy in heart and life.'

Such were the workings of his humble and deeply spiritual mind, and such the preparation of a heart which in after-life, by those who knew it not, was charged with being ignorant of the feelings of vital religion. Nor were

those feelings changed by years — he died as he had lived, in the expression of them. Among his last words were, ‘Bear me witness, I have no merit of my own : as a guilty sinner I go to my Saviour, casting all my reliance on him, on the atonement of his blood.’

Within a few months after he had entered the counting-house, a letter was received by him, which, with his own inward whisperings, must have fully satisfied even his doubting mind of his fitness for higher things. This was an unsolicited call from the authorities at Princeton, inviting him to the station of college tutor. The invitation was a flattering one. As a youth of eighteen, it was a high compliment to his acquisitions and judgment ; as an Episcopalian, it was an equally high one to his integrity and candor ; and doubly gratifying, in both respects, as coming from those who were best acquainted with both his sentiments and talents. The following letters communicate both the offer and his acceptance of it.

‘Princeton, November 18th, 1793.

Dear Sir,

It has been suggested that your own inclinations would lead you to pursue your liberal studies to a greater extent, and that a residence at Princeton would not be disagreeable to you, in order to have the more leisure for improvement. Although I have reason to believe

that advantageous proposals will be made you by Mr. S., yet I have been desired to inquire whether or not you will accept of an appointment in college, in the room of Mr. Abeel. I know not your private views, nor how such a situation would accord with your ideas; but if you were willing to accept the appointment, there is no person who would more unanimously obtain it; and, I must say for myself, it would be peculiarly agreeable to me. Your answer to this inquiry, by the first post, will very much oblige, dear Sir,

Your very humble servant,

SAMUEL S. SMITH.'

'Philadelphia, November 23d, 1793.

Sir,

I must acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant, and should have sooner paid it the necessary attention, had not its contents, interesting in a high degree to my future welfare and happiness, required consideration. The confidence of the faculty, with which I am so unexpectedly honored, excites in my mind a lively gratitude, accompanied by a feeling conviction of the necessity of the most unremitting exertions on my part to fulfil with honor the office they would confer upon me. A desire to pursue with advantage studies of a liberal nature, and also to have leisure for reflection and improvement, have induced me to look upon a residence at Princeton as desirable; and I had it in contemplation, with the consent of my friends, to remove there to pursue my studies in a private capacity. But as the offer, to which your letter has reference, would afford a greater scope for improvement, my own wishes, and of consequence the consent of my friends, lead to the acceptance of it. At the same time, I repeat

the declaration, that I am fully sensible the greatest exertions on my part could alone qualify me for the honorable discharge of its important duties. These I can safely promise, from a principle of duty, will not be wanting. The wish of the faculty on this subject should be handed to me by the first opportunity, as immediate preparations will be necessary. With a high sense of the honor conferred upon me by the confidence of the faculty, and of your kind wishes with respect to my future engagements, I remain their and your

Most obliged servant,

JOHN H. HOBART.'

The following letter is to an old college friend, written from Princeton soon after his second return to it, though it would seem as yet with no official appointment.

'Princeton, July 25th, 1794.

Dear Sir,

The receipt of your letter of 2d June gave me very great pleasure. I was fearful mine had miscarried. In this situation your letter was peculiarly acceptable. I have not as yet found reason to alter an opinion I early adopted, that the portion of life spent in the place of our education is the happiest. The engagements of future life, then beheld at a distance, promise happiness. The field of science lies before us, and we think we can never be tired traversing it. Thus happy in our present engagements, and in the anticipation of those that are to come, the season of youth glides away. But, in fact, man is ever anticipating happiness: and does not this clearly prove that he is to exist hereafter? Does it not

prove that this life was never designed to afford him complete enjoyment? Does it not enforce the necessity of his directing his attention to that life to which both reason and revelation teach him this is only an introduction? And yet how few make this natural and obvious improvement! Science, honor, riches, pleasure, are ardently pursued, but the qualifications for a future state of being are little sought after. Men live here as if they were to live here for ever, or as if, at the close of this life, an everlasting sleep were to level them with the brutes that perish.

I have relinquished mercantile business, and intend to spend the summer here in reading. I returned with great satisfaction to the scenes of my former improvement and pleasure. They strongly recall to my mind those with whom I spent my time so agreeably; and I seldom enter the rooms of my former companions without thinking of them. College is very full. The Whigs are superior alike in numbers and merit; and if they continue to act with the same prudence, will increase the dignity and honor of the Society. There is every prospect of their obtaining the highest honors at the ensuing Commencement, and, if we may judge from present appearances, many future ones. This information, I know, will give you pleasure.'

In answer, his friend observes :

'You tell me you have declined the pursuit of mercantile business. I applaud your resolution. Do not suppose I flatter when I say, I have always thought you well calculated for some profession where oratorical talent might be displayed. The mercantile business is suited to those who have not had your opportunities.

Besides the profit, nothing can be said in its praise. But most professions are profitable as well as that, and besides, put a man in the line of honor and preferment. The professional man, too, is better calculated for rendering services to society, — no small source of comfort to him. But what do you mean to pursue after you leave Princeton? Let me invite you to the study of the law. My best wishes attend the Whig Society. The institution will be remembered to my latest moments. If any of my old acquaintances are at Princeton make my regards to them.

Your sincere friend,

W. M. WATKINS.'

The contemplated college arrangement, however mutually desirable and desired as it might seem, did not yet take effect until near two years afterward. On the present occasion the failure arose on part of the college, from some misunderstanding not very clearly explained, and the place was filled with another, though, as was stated to Mr. H., 'temporarily.' But, in the mean time, his own views of its desirableness were changed, or rather fluctuated, bringing his mind into that painful state of doubt which often besets the young when called upon to decide their course in life. On such occasion the mental vision becomes confused: like the eye of a landsman at sea, it looks into a hazy atmosphere, where it mistakes alike the size, distance, and shapes of

objects. Thus it was with our inexperienced collegian. Touching an offer precisely the same in the conclusion as at the beginning, he concurred, retracted, hesitated, declined, and finally accepted.

Now this unimportant circumstance is here noticed, because in after-life his decisions bore such an opposite character, being so rapid and unwavering as to look more like instinct than reflection, and with such a clear forecast of consequences, that we might almost apply to him the eulogium of the Roman orator, '*Prudentiam ejus quodammodo esse divinationem.*'* But this change was obviously one not of character, but of circumstance: the same conscientiousness which made him doubtful when ignorant, made him firm when instructed; and the same sagacity which in youth made his intellectual perceptions too acute for his judgment, was the very source, in after-life, of that promptitude of choice, and perseverance in action, which made him, both in deliberation and act, the admiration of his friends, and the dread of his opponents. It was (to repeat the analogy) the same eye looking out into the same misty atmosphere, but now guided by a seaman's judgment, and aided by the telescope of experience.

* *Neros in Cic.*

Few, indeed, better than Bishop Hobart, deserved the praise once bestowed upon Themistocles, of being ‘a good guesser of the future by the past;’ his official life having been mostly spent in the maintenance of a policy which anticipated the results of experience, and the opposition he met with being that which awaits all men in public life whose sagacity foresees consequences beyond the vision of those with whom they are called upon to act. Nor, in truth, was the argument on this occasion one so easily summed up. On the one side, as he rightly argued, were ‘the advantages the situation would give for study and reflection;’ on the other, that ‘the duties of the office would require more ability and experience than he possessed at his early age.’ ‘The association to which it would lead him with men of talents and information,’ was certainly an advantage; but to this there was to be set in opposition, that ‘he would be obliged to shake off many pleasing intimacies with the students;’ and while he appreciated ‘the advantage of being called to direct and influence the conduct of others, as fitting him for active intercourse with mankind,’ he yet felt the ‘loss of being unable to participate in the enjoyments of that Society in whose business and discussions

he had always taken so conspicuous a part.' As an Episcopalian, he doubted the prudence or delicacy of becoming an officer in a seminary, practically, if not professedly, Presbyterian ; and, as an affectionate son, he felt very unwilling to separate himself from an aged mother. 'My friends,' says he, in a letter to Skinner, 'though they acquiesce in this scheme, are averse to it. It is their wish that I should be with them. My mother, also, would lose a great part of her happiness, were I to be away from her. She is now in the decline of life. Her children's happiness and interests have been the object of all her exertions, and these now demand from them every attention which it is in their power to render. Uncertain how long she may be with us, I cannot think of leaving her. She and all my other relations, however, wish me to go if I think it would be most to my advantage and interest.'

Now this turmoil of contending motives was a state of mind certainly not desirable, perhaps not needful in the case ; and yet, on the whole, it had its disciplining advantages : it deepened his knowledge of human nature, by making him better acquainted with his own character ; it opened up to him the common springs of action in the breast, and

thus contributed to arm him for future contest with the wills of others, by teaching him where lay the weak points of his own.

In estimating the causes which form the youthful mind, too much stress is generally laid upon external aids and circumstances. It is doubtless the inward discipline that tells the most : the battle of passion within, once fought and won, is worth volumes for teaching us how victory is to be gained ; and he who has once been called upon, as young Hobart here was, to hold the balance long and even, in some great and dubious decision of life, has learned more than either books or men can teach him, by what weights the scales of judgment are turned, and, what is still more practical, how to manage those nicer *scruples* by which the trembling beam is finally determined. Even when the judgment is wrong in such emergencies, the benefit is not therefore lost, since error may be a yet deeper teacher than truth, and painful experience of our own mistakes but render more searching the counsels of future friendship. In either case, where there is sincerity of purpose, the advantage is gained of learning the human heart — in its length and breadth and depth — in its fears, its hopes, its weaknesses, and its strength. One thus trained by self-discipline, when

called to be a spiritual or prudential monitor to others, feels himself as a guide through a country with which he is familiar: he will therefore fill not the ear with words, but the mind with thoughts, and the heart with confidence; the doubting wanderer yielding himself at once to a guide whose eye is so clear, and whose step so firm and unhesitating.

Although there may be no sufficient ground for attributing so large an influence to this particular passage of young Hobart's life, there is yet no question that he had early acquired, in a singularly eminent degree, the governing talent of leading all minds that came in contact with his own; and there can be as little doubt, on all the principles of sound philosophy, that the self-experience to which the earlier events of his life led him, by throwing him much upon his own resources, was the training that gave it to him.

The following letter to his mother marks the period of his second entrance on academic duties.

'Princeton, October 31st, 1795.

I think of you, my dear Mamma, much oftener than I write to you; and whenever I do, I wish very much to be with you. I lament sometimes that I cannot enjoy the advantages of my present situation, and at the same time the company of my dear mother and all

whom I love in Philadelphia; but this is more than I have any right to expect. I hope, however, when I have made more proficiency in my studies, to spend some time again at home before entering on my profession. Afterward it seems uncertain where I shall be; but wherever it shall please God to place me, I trust I shall be contented; and, indeed, how can I be otherwise when I reflect that he hath placed me there!

Much as I suffered, and still do suffer, from the deprivation of a very dear friend, I yet feel the fullest conviction that it was intended for my good; and I humbly trust that in some degree at least it has had this effect. I feel more disposed than ever I did to perform faithfully every duty arising from my relations to this world. I feel more anxious than ever to qualify myself for the important and sacred office which I have in view; but I have been taught no longer to look for complete happiness here; and while I feel grateful for every blessing I possess, yet do I look for perfect enjoyment only in another world. *In proportion as I profit by this lesson, I feel contented and happy.* Till lately I felt anxious and troubled about many things which I now consider as of little importance. Relying too much upon myself and upon the world, I experienced frequently a great deal of uneasiness, which I am now delivered from when reflecting on the infinite wisdom and goodness of an Almighty Parent. Thus what is itself the cause of my sorrow, tends to my real advantage. I am thus free in writing to you, my dear Mamma, because I think it will give you satisfaction; and I feel so sensibly how much you have done for me, that I would wish to make you every return in my power.

I have received a letter from Colonel Skinner, and also one from Miss Skinner, in answer to those which I wrote. When I have an opportunity I will let you see them.

I am perfectly well, and you may depend I shall never neglect my health. As I unite a proper degree of exercise with study, I am under no apprehension of injuring myself in that way; and I shall endeavor to correct in that which you mention.

Forsyth stays here all the vacation, which, you may be sure, gives me pleasure. He joins in love to my dear mamma with her sincerely affectionate

JOHN H. HOBART,

In January, 1796, he entered upon his new duties, taking about the same time his second academic degree of A. M. Some yet live who remember him as college tutor, and all concur in giving to him a character peculiarly well fitted for duties, which in his humility he esteemed himself unequal to. ‘As an officer, prompt and efficient; as an instructor, able and successful,’—‘in manner, alike firm and conciliatory; dignified, yet unassuming;’—‘vehement in emotion, but moderate in action; earnest in reproof, yet mild in punishment,’—all these traits go to mark him such a tutor, as good students must have loved, bad ones feared, and all respected. But the original sources of this information are too honorable to him to be withheld.

‘He was,’ says Dr. Caldwell,* as ‘an instructor ardent, industrious, and faithful, and always acted upon principle and conscience in the discharge of his duties. He was prompt in action and expression; sometimes vehement, and in danger of a little transport, but ready afterward to admit it, and conceding with a becoming manliness of spirit. In his tutorship he maintained himself with a sense of danger on these accounts, and was considered as interesting by a union of earnestness with simplicity and ingenuousness of feeling.’

A letter to him from Princeton, during his absence, introduces the name of another friend, upon whose pen we shall also draw for a picture, while the letter itself affords a proof of the kindly feelings with which he was everywhere regarded. ‘I returned on Friday,’ says Henry Kollock, ‘to Nassau, after spending a vacation diversified with different hues. The college will probably continue with very few students this session. Mr. Beasley has been here some time. -I am highly pleased with him from my short acquaintance, and anticipate much pleasure in his society. Good Mrs. Knox thinks of you with the same affection, and talks of you with the same kindness which

* Rev. Joseph Caldwell, D. D., President of University of North-Carolina, Chapel Hill.

she always entertained for you. She charges me to remember her to you in the tenderest manner.'

'In the fall of 1795,' says the Rev. Dr. Beasley, the friend above alluded to, 'commenced my acquaintance with Mr. Hobart. Never shall I forget the impression produced upon my mind by my first introduction to him, and the conversation which followed. Having myself just entered the college at Princeton as an under-graduate of the junior class, upon some occasion of business in which his advice was solicited, I was conducted into the room which he occupied as his study, and saw a youth of no very prepossessing appearance, (at least to me at that period,) seated at his desk, and engaged in the study of theology. I beheld before me a figure of middling size, sallow complexion, features somewhat irregular, a countenance obscured in its expression by the use of glasses to correct the deficiency of short sight, a contracted forehead, and a head thickly covered with hair, while all its proportions were imperfectly defined. I had been previously informed that he was a youth of uncommon parts, and had graduated in college a few years before with the highest honors of the institution. His first appearance but little accorded with the expectations that had been awakened of

his talents and interesting qualities. These unfavorable prepossessions, however, were immediately removed when I was introduced, entered into conversation with him, and caught the silver tones of his voice. He received us with that frank, cordial, and ardent manner by which he was so peculiarly distinguished, and in a few moments I was convinced that he possessed remarkable clearness of understanding, and readiness and powers of conversation. He at once entered with the deepest interest into the business upon which we had been induced to seek an interview, gave us satisfactory information on the subject, explained the best mode of proceeding in the case, tendered the offers of any services in future ; and I left him so much gratified and delighted, that a foundation was then laid for the subsequent intimacy between us, which has formed one of the highest sources of my satisfaction in life ; and the loss of which, at this moment, presents to my imagination and feelings one of the widest vacuities in the series of earthly enjoyments.'

The kindness and promptness of service, which thus won the heart of the young student, continued throughout life a characteristic trait of Mr. Hobart's character, and made him, wherever circumstances placed him, though but for a day, friend and patron both in heart

and hand to all who stood in need of his aid or sympathy. Lest, however, a false impression should be given to strangers of his personal appearance by the above description, it must be added, that he was then laboring under the effects of severe indisposition, brought upon him by overstrained application. As a picture of him in subsequent life, it is far from doing him justice. Though rather under size, his figure was well proportioned, and strongly knit, giving the impression of strength and hardihood, and that greater at a second glance than at first it seemed to promise. His movements were not only quick but energetic, and the expression of his countenance, while it corresponded with every varying emotion of his mind, never lost its ready smile of cheerfulness and kindness. It was such a countenance and manner as a stranger would address with undoubting confidence that he would meet with no unkind repulse.

We have already seen several instances of the freedom with which his pen was put in requisition for Commencement speeches. The following letter from a quondam friend, who had taken or was about taking Orders in the Presbyterian Church, shows that his aid was not always confined to academic walls and subjects.

'New-Brunswick, June 1st, 1797.

My dear Friend,

I cheerfully embrace the opportunity of Mr. C.'s return from New-York, to convey a few lines for your perusal. It would have given me great satisfaction to have seen and conversed with you at the meeting of the Presbytery in April last, but you had gone to Philadelphia. I hope you have returned to Princeton, refreshed by relaxation from study and college business, and with your mind fortified by cheerful resignation and calm resolution to bear any trial of life. I have received no answer as yet to the letter I wrote to Forsyth. My time will be during this summer so wholly engrossed by study, that I am afraid I shall be deemed negligent by some of my friends; to you, my dear John, I shall dedicate whatever with propriety I can, and would wish as much as possible of communication with your enlarged understanding and feeling heart.

The Presbytery have appointed me a popular discourse on Hosea, 13th chapter, 9th verse, and a lecture on 2d Samuel, 23d chapter, first five verses. This last is a little peculiar, as mixing critical with practical divinity. I am here much in want of critical commentators. I wish, therefore, you would at your leisure oblige me so much, as to select from Patrick, Poole, and others, as short and judicious an explication of these verses as you can with convenience, as also Dr. Smith's and your own sentiments on this passage.

Mr. Scott and Mr. Sloane, after delivering their discourses, were yesterday licensed. Mr. Scott will be at Princeton this week; his health seems very precarious. Good young man, I trust he may be spared for usefulness in life.

I wish much to hear from Caldwell and Forsyth; if

you have received late letters, inform me in your next. Make my excuses to my friend Thomas How for not yet writing to him. He likes long epistles, and I am overcrowded with business. However, assure him of one soon. Make my respects to Mercer, a young man I highly esteem, and hope to see a good and highly valuable member of society.

My dear John, write me soon, and be assured of the kindest regards of your affectionate friend,

EBEN. GRANT.'

The college of Nassau, never deficient in its due share of the talented youth of our country, seems at this time to have had more than its usual proportion. In addition to those already mentioned, may be added the names of two who advanced to be governors of their native State, Peter Early, and George M. Troup, of Georgia; two of high rank in the Federal Government, Richard Rush, late Minister to the Court of St. James, and John M. Berrien, late Attorney-General; two heads of universities, Joseph Caldwell, President of the University of North-Carolina, and Frederick Beasley, Provost of that of Pennsylvania; the Hon. William Gaston, of North-Carolina; the Hon. Charles Fenton Mercer, of Virginia; John Sergeant and William Meredith, of Pennsylvania; the Rev. Dr. Kollock, of Savannah, and Judge Burnet, of Ohio; besides many

others whose professional rank and private virtues would justly entitle them to enumeration. With many of these his surviving contemporaries, the recollection of their college friend is vivid and strong; with all, amiable and pleasing. The following are selected: 'I was not,' says Sergeant, 'his contemporary at Princeton; he preceded me by several years. When I first arrived at college, he was living in the town as a graduate, engaged in the pursuit of his theological studies. I rarely saw him; but the place was full of his fame. Every one who had opportunities of knowing him, dwelt upon his talents and power of application. He had gained, while in college, the first honors of his class, and gave every presage of the intellectual eminence that awaited him in after-life. He continued to keep up an occasional connection with one of the literary societies to which he had belonged, where his abilities were always usefully and signally displayed.'

'Mr. Hobart,' says Mr. Rush, 'graduated before my entrance into college, which was in the spring of 1794. In the fall preceding, he returned to pursue the study of divinity. It was then I saw him for the first time, and regarded him with great interest on account of the distinguished reputation he had established

in college ; but he being a graduate, which separated him from association with the students, and I being very young, we seldom met. My chief recollection of him is as a member of the Whig Society ; he generally attended the meetings, and always maintained there a decided ascendancy. From that period till his death I seldom saw him, but observed his course at a distance, as marked by the same elevation which distinguished him in early life.'

Mr. Gaston says, ' I had not the honor of being an associate of the late Bishop Hobart during his collegiate course ; he graduated in 1793, and I entered as a member of the junior class at the beginning of the winter session of 1794. He was still, however, residing in college, when I reached Princeton, which was to me a subject of deep interest, from the animated contest in which he had been engaged for the first honor of his class. Between the graduates and students there were very few ties. Although I saw him every day, nothing occurred to bring about us any thing like intimacy. I retain, however, a vivid and distinct recollection of his face, person, gait, manners, and voice, these all rendered him interesting ; they indicated quickness of perception, activity, kindness, depth and ardor of feeling. With respect to his merit, there

was but one opinion : all esteemed him for his genius, learning, and virtue.'

Mr. Troup's account goes further, having enjoyed the advantage of being under his tutorship. 'The impressions,' says he, 'made in early life of the purity, worth, and piety, which distinguished the late Bishop Hobart, are yet lively, and can never be effaced. He was our tutor at Princeton, and was as much respected, and as universally beloved as ever tutor was, or as the relation between preceptor and student permits. His after course truly corresponded with the hopes then entertained of him, and he seems to have fulfilled to the last, and to the last tittle, the sanguine predictions of those senior friends whose sagacity foresaw the future, and detected the germs of that usefulness and loveliness which it is your* province, as it will be your pleasure, to record.'

The following letter to his mother introduces the notice of another college friend, upon whom, after the death of young Forsyth, his warm affections seemed mainly to rest—an attachment which continued through life.

* Addressed to Rev. W. Berrian, his Biographer, and Editor of his Works.

' Princeton, August 28th, 1797.

The affectionate letter of my dear mother gave me as much consolation as my mind was then fitted to receive; and the soothing and sympathetic counsel of my dear sister, with the bright motives her letter suggested to resignation and hope, shed a light on the darkness of my mind that revived and comforted me: indeed I am at a loss to express my grateful feelings for the consolation her letter gave me. The affectionate prayers of my dear mother for my comfort and happiness, will not, I trust, be vain. I trust that Providence will bless to me that state of sober and calm reflection that succeeds the first agony of grief; and however my feelings may be excited when I think of the friend I once had, but now have no more, I yet trust I shall know that a steady and constant reliance on the goodness of a gracious Providence is a support adequate to the greatest trials I can be called on to bear. But alas! how difficult to realize this powerful motive to resignation!

John (Forsyth) and myself have both received short letters from his mamma, written near a week after she had heard of the death of Robert, which was announced to her by a messenger while she was on the road from Augusta to see him. She had raised herself, for the first time, from her pillow to write the few lines she forwarded to us. It gave me pleasure to see that, in the midst of inexpressible grief, the natural strength of her mind was fortified by the pious resignation and hope of the Christian; and that a sense of duty to her remaining son, while it led her to repress her own grief to alleviate his, made her also consider life as still desirable for his sake. I wrote to her by the succeeding

post. The illness of Robert was but of few days, from Friday to Wednesday,—an inflammatory fever which ended in mortification.

It seems as if, whatever losses I may sustain, I am not to be left wholly destitute of those enjoyments my feelings lead me most to value. I have experienced from an amiable young man, (Mercer,) who lives with me, the sage counsel of manhood, with the tenderness and affection of the warmest heart. He receives the first honors in his class, and graduates this fall, and presses me with tender solicitude to spend the six weeks' vacation with him in Virginia. The disinterested kindness with which he urges the necessity of some great change of scene for my health and spirits, with my own conviction that it would be beneficial, incline me to go. I mention these circumstances that I may receive direction and advice upon the subject.

I am, my dear mamma, your sincerely affectionate

JOHN H. HOBART.

N. B. Ten dollars inclosed.'

The following letters from him to his mother and his friend Mercer, indicate that the proposed journey was taken, and proved not only favorable to health and spirits, but left upon his ardent mind such a warm impression of kindness as came well-nigh to change his own destinies and those of the Church, by a permanent residence at the South.

'Fredericksburg, October 26.

My dear Mamma,

I got to this place from Mr. Garnett's in Essex county, about an hour ago; but, on application at the office, find the stage full, and no possibility of my getting on before Monday. I don't know when I have met with a severer disappointment. Considering the short time I shall be with you, two days are of material consequence. I must, however, submit, and endeavor to make myself as contented as possible. You may expect to see me much fatter than when I left home; but still do not raise your expectations too high. I don't know when I have spent my time more agreeably.

The family in which I have been form a scene of domestic happiness that my imagination has often painted, but such as I have never before found realized. Every want and even wish supplied by an ample sufficiency, content beams, I may say, in every countenance. And then their manners, unfettered by the artificial forms of politeness, and yet entirely removed from rustic plainness, mark the artless expression of internal goodness wishing to dispense happiness to all around. In such society could I be otherwise than happy? With love to all, yours, &c.

JOHN H. HOBART.'

'Philadelphia, November 5th, 1797.

I was disappointed, my dear Mercer, in not getting a letter from you by yesterday's mail. The amiable and delightful society of Essex are almost constantly in my thoughts: I fancy myself still among them, and I cherish the pleasing delusion. The time spent there was a period of unaffected happiness, such as I never before enjoyed: it was perfectly congenial to my wishes; it

realized those scenes of domestic bliss and social life, amiable and refined,—of simplicity and ardent benevolence, which my imagination has often exhibited to me, but rather as visionary forms with which she so often dazzles us, than as realities that I should ever enjoy in this world. If I am ever happy in life, it can only be in such society as that; and I am daily and hourly more confirmed in the plan I had thought of, to settle in Virginia. The obstacles to this plan from this quarter, though I never supposed they would be serious, are even less than I expected; and what sanctions my wishes is the consideration, that where I can live most happily I can there be also most useful. Yes, my dear Mercer, the affable and open manners of those of the Virginians I have seen, their desire and constant attention to make others happy, are precisely what I have always wished to find in the society where I should fix. And if the ardent desire of my soul should be gratified in possessing the affections of one who possesses all mine, where is the constituent of human bliss that I should need? But let me moderate these anticipations of happiness; let me remember that disappointment and affliction must still attend my weary pilgrimage.

To you, my much-loved Mercer I owe much, very much. Your counsel has aided me; your sympathy has soothed me; your unwearied attentions and exertions have contributed to restore peace to a disordered mind. Let me still, my dearest friend, enjoy your friendship, and I shall have at least one worldly comfort among its many, many sorrows.

Do not think of renouncing your plan of returning to Princeton: as it respects advantages for study and means of enjoyment, it is in every way most eligible.

Remember me affectionately to your sister, and the rest of the family at Essex; and when you have an opportunity, let your friends at Salvington know that I shall not soon forget their kind attention to me.

With much affection yours,

J. H. HOBART.'

'Princeton, November 21st, 1797.

My dear Mercer,

I have been waiting impatiently to hear from you, both while I was in Philadelphia, and since I came to this place. I directed my letter to you at Fredericksburg, at which place you will doubtless be before you come on. You see I am calculating on this event. Indeed, I believe it will be so instrumental to your improvement and happiness, that I am particularly desirous of it. Your old room shall receive you. I will welcome you with open arms, and you will enjoy happiness from the society of those who esteem and love you. Believe me, there are not a few particularly earnest in their inquiries when you are coming. I have received two kind and, let me add, tenderly affectionate letters from Mr. Garnett and your sister. Oh! my friend, what a luxury it is to me to enjoy the esteem of the virtuous and the feeling! I sometimes think I am too desirous of it; it makes my happiness depend too much upon others; it renders me tremblingly, and often painfully alive even to the appearance of displeasure in them, and consequently to the smallest error in myself. But the society of your friends in Essex yielded me a pleasure indeed unmixed with pain. I never think of them but with emotions of the highest affection; and am only pained that it is not in my power to express my feelings otherwise than by words. Let their own

goodness of heart supply what words must ever want. Let me again express the interest I take in your return, if yourself and friends should deem it proper. In no place can you enjoy equal advantages for study; in no place, I think, will external circumstances be more favorable to your happiness. True, it is our first duty to adapt our minds to our situation, and thus learn to be content in any; and I trust you will always endeavor to be so: but then we are not required, for the mere sake of self-denial, to relinquish any real happiness. Let then the enjoyments of a college life again be yours.

With the sincerest friendship, truly yours,

J. H. HOBART.

The following letters are from early companions, the most of whom are already familiar to the reader: they afford, like the preceding, pleasing proof of the feelings with which he was regarded, and the continuance of those feelings after the temporary tie of intimacy was broken.

'New-Brunswick, March 20th 1797.

Dear John,

I really imagined that a certain person would before this have stolen a few moments from business or sleep, to let a friend know whether he was dead or alive; but the most confident expectations of man, as I now learn, may be disappointed. It has been my determination to be somewhat punctilious in conducting my correspondence with a numerous acquaintance, especially at this time, when business crowds upon me.

But, somehow or other, I cannot be so with you, even although you are indebted to me, and when I saw you last, gave me a promise of writing. I have very little time, however, now to write, as Scott is going immediately; but if this serves the end intended, I shall make some expectation of a few lines by the bearer. Dear John, excuse my haste: I long to hear how you are. Remember me kindly to every inquiring friend.

The last Tuesday in April I shall be at Princeton; but as that will be in vacation, I wish, if possible, you could pay me a visit before that time, for I shall not be able.

Believe me sincerely your friend.

EBENEZER GRANT.'

This is the last letter that appears from this affectionate, single-hearted friend. His subsequent course, however, (the writer speaks from his own knowledge, was one of unpretending ministerial usefulness. He removed to Bedford, Westchester county, N. Y., where his virtues secured the esteem of all, of whatever denomination, and, among others, of one individual whose regard was in itself a warrant of Christian character, the late Governor Jay. There, unburdened by the cares of a family, and above the fear of want by the inheritance of a paternal property, he cared only for the spiritual interests of those with whom he was connected, taking up his sojourn among his parishioners, wherever he found himself most useful, with an apostolic simplicity that spoke

equally for their and his sincerity ; and thus in humility he labored till called to his reward.

' Philadelphia, August 24th, 1797.

My dear John,

I have always been so negligent a correspondent, that I suppose you will be at least as much surprised at receiving a letter, as at my long silence. While I freely own I have no good apology to make, I can assure you I never think of it without regret. It has not, at any rate, been occasioned by indifference, or want of regard for you. The many testimonies of your affection I have experienced, and the happiness I have always felt in your society, have made too deep an impression on my heart ever to be effaced ; so that, although a mutual exchange of sentiments during separation is agreeable, and a very natural consequence of mutual friendship, I yet sensibly feel it is not necessary to its continuance.

I most sincerely sympathize with you in the loss you have sustained in the death of your much-valued friend Forsyth. It must be a severe trial to you : to his mother the loss will be irreparable. She appeared passionately attached to him, and he was doubtless looked up to as the hope of the family. I am sensible that indulgence of grief on your part is unavoidable ; therefore I cannot blame it ; yet I trust the reflection that it is the act of that Being who knows best what is good for us, will moderate that sorrow for your loss, which, while it is natural to feel, if indulged to excess, would be hurtful to yourself, and distressing to your friends—to those particularly whose happiness seems centred in yours.

With respect to Horsley's tracts, I intended them for you ; they are entirely at your disposal. I shall write again, and hope that my long neglect will not deprive me of the pleasure of hearing occasionally from you.

I am, my dear John, affectionately yours,

JAMES ROBERTSON.'

The following is a solitary memorial from one whose name never again appears. It indicates, at least, that the tutor was often merged in the kind friend, even toward the dull or negligent student.

' Orangedale, September 4th, 1797.

Respected Tutor,

I take the liberty to address you on a subject of the greatest importance to me. It is to request you to prepare my Commencement oration. I am sensible, Sir, that I ask a great favor ; but the necessity of the occasion urges me to it. Ever since examination I have been thinking to write it myself : my health, however, being impaired by a sedentary life, I found it necessary to employ my time in riding, and visiting my friends ; and thus deferred it, from time to time, until this late hour. And now I am so indisposed from a bad cold, that I find it impossible to write the oration myself. I therefore make my first request to you, Sir, in whom I have always found the strictest sincerity. I wish only a short one. A few leisure moments in your hands will amply suffice. Choose a subject most agreeable to yourself ; it will not fail to please me. If finished one week or four days before Commencement, I

shall think myself exceedingly favored. In the course of ten or twelve days I hope to be in Princeton. If you can, consistently with duty, oblige me at this time, I know it will be done. If you do write my oration, I shall consider myself bound to you by the strongest ties of gratitude and friendship.

I am, Sir, yours sincerely,

P. LE C.'

Whether this lazy, grateful youth succeeded in his request to be permitted to shine in borrowed plumes, there are no evidences to show. The easy *nonchalance* of the letter inclines us to hope the reverse, and that his name appeared in the handbills, on that occasion, with the usual suspicious note:—‘Mr. P. Le C.’ ‘Oration on the danger of Procrastination.’

N. B. ‘Prevented by indisposition from delivering it.’

The next is from a living pen, and shows that turn for metaphysical speculation by which, in after-life, it has been honorably distinguished.

‘Edenton, January 5th, 1798.

Dear Sir,

I always feel an inward satisfaction in unfolding my sentiments to one whom I look upon as a true friend; and my satisfaction is increased when I remember that my friend is a Christian. * * * * *

Every object here, whether animate or inanimate, affords me pleasure. I sometimes converse a consider-

able time with a tree that in my infancy invited me to play under its cool and refreshing shade; and the old dwelling, in which I have spent the greater part of my life, though at present unoccupied and falling into ruin, raises within me such a musing train of ideas, that I know not whether it be pleasing or painful. Now, whether it arise from an intimate association of ideas, or from some qualities in the insensible objects themselves to create an affection, I shall not pretend to determine; but certain it is, that the love we bear for objects incapable of making a return, seems always more disinterested, and frequently affords us more lasting happiness, than even that which we feel toward rational creatures.

I have the pleasure to inform you that there is now a greater prospect of my being restored to health than there ever was while I was at college. Should my hopes of recovery now prove fallacious, I shall be happy in being spared a few more days, that I may devote them to the worship of my merciful God, and the service of my fellow-creatures.

To our shame we must acknowledge, my dear Hobart, that, in this part of our country, religion is in a declining state. The Holy Jerusalem doth, indeed, here droop her head, and the City of the living God is destitute of inhabitants. There is, however, a proportionately great field opened in the pulpit for the display of talent. The people possess, in general, generous and noble sentiments, have warm feelings, and are easily guided by the powers of the orator. They are fond of acquiring knowledge, but without the perseverance necessary to arrive at perfection. Hence the poison of infidelity has contaminated the minds of both rulers and subjects among us. The works of Paine have

done more injury to North-Carolina, than ever the writings of philosophers have done it good. With love to all friends in college, and praying that God may bless you,

I remain your friend and brother in CHRIST,

FREDERICK BEASLEY.'

The writer of the following appears to have derived advantage from Mr. Hobart's kindness or Christian counsel, perhaps both, though his name appears in no other record that remains.

' Canonsburgh, 3d January, 1798.

Dear Sir,

Two or three weeks have passed since I was favored with your kind letter of 22d of November. It was exceedingly welcome, for we were waiting with anxiety for one from you, and several times had been at the post-office on that account. You are giving us fresh proofs of what we have been long experiencing, that you spare neither pains nor expense when you have it in your power to oblige. I think I can with sincerity say, that it would be one of my greatest gratifications to repay benefits; but I have been all along so situated as much to need friends, and so highly favored as to meet with many who have so loaded me with favors, that it is certainly vain for me to expect, by any returns I shall ever be able to make, to get clear of my burden.

Could I but believe and realize the great truths of Christianity, as I think I have sometimes done, it would give vigor to my soul, and opposing mountains would sink into the dust; but it is a truth which I am every

day learning by sad experience, that never will I move in the Christian course without wisdom, strength and righteousness imparted daily from on high. I am often so enveloped in darkness as to be unable to feel the force of any one truth in natural or revealed religion, or even my own departure from this world, and existence beyond the grave.

Mr. Hughes joins with me in acknowledging an irredeemable debt of gratitude due you.

Your much obliged friend,

JOHN WATSON.'

'Philadelphia, February 15th, 1798.

Dear John,

In one of your letters you mention with satisfaction the time we passed together in the store. If my company at that time afforded you any pleasure, or in any degree alleviated the toils and fatigue of a business which I was always persuaded was not congenial to your inclinations, I can say with sincerity it did not surpass the pleasure I enjoyed in yours. Though the ties of parental affection must be stronger than what accidental attachment can inspire, yet I must say, that no one can regret more than I do that you have been for a long time past so great a stranger in Philadelphia. You know my indifferent state of health and spirits; and though it may seem to border on extravagance, it is not the less true, that the short periods you have spent occasionally here within these two years, have, besides the pleasure of your company, been attended with beneficial effects. My happiness at the time made me forget my complaints, and my cheerfulness continued after the cause was removed.

It is true, that the pursuits you mention would be most agreeable to my inclinations and conducive to my happiness; and the prospect of being able at some future day to realize them, has animated me to persevere in a business for which I never had any great inclination. Though not so enterprising as some, I have not, I think, been wanting in such attention as both duty and interest required. It is with regret, however, I must add, that our success has not been equal to our exertions, and that the object of my wishes is still at a great distance. Should we be, however, tolerably successful for a few years, a plan of life similar to what you mention would be my choice; and I can assure you, my dear John, that no part of it would afford me more real pleasure than having frequent opportunities of enjoying your company. But, whatever be my lot, I am sensible of the folly of giving way to unavailing despondency, and shall endeavor to avoid it. There is no truth more firmly impressed on my mind, than that we are all under the care of a wise Providence, and that when we have done our duty, whatever may be the result, we may reasonably conclude that it is what in infinite wisdom is thought best for us.

I am, my dear John, yours very affectionately,

JAMES ROBERTSON.*

Such principles as those this letter expresses, in a young man were calculated to secure success, and the reader will be pleased to learn that he attained it; * and though he turned

* James Robertson, Esq., now (1835) President of the Richmond Bank.

not, as his words would imply an intention of doing, to the ministry of the Gospel, it was, we may trust, from finding that a pious layman is not excluded from being also a 'preacher of righteousness.'

The following is from a living friend, whose pen has been already drawn upon, and one who has fully redeemed the virtuous resolutions with which it concludes. The error he laments is, besides, one so common in our country, that its strong statement may be of value in leading to its correction.

' Cincinnati, February 20th, 1798.

My dear Friend,

Your kind letter of the 21st December, though directed to me at Newark, hath by the attention of my good brother, found me at this place. The happiness I experienced on receiving it you can imagine better than I can describe, for you know my heart, and I can cheerfully forgive and forget your past omissions, as you have now given me such a pledge of future constancy.

A perusal of your epistle enkindled in my bosom those emotions of joy and delight, which a remembrance of former companions, and past scenes of innocent amusement and instruction are ever wont to inspire. The bare mention of 'Nassau Hall' gives me pleasing and grateful sensations. I shall ever feel a thankful attachment to that seminary, which I view as the parent of the chief happiness I expect to enjoy. Frequently have I lamented that my years were so few and my judgment so tender, while there, that I was

incapable of either knowing or reaping those advantages which I now find the institution is calculated to give. My case was perhaps that of many others. I had then an affectionate, fond parent, whose only delight was to give happiness to his children, and render them at the same time useful to mankind. Through a blind but benevolent zeal, he wished to see his son a man while he was yet a boy, and his sanguine expectations anticipated nature by at least two years; so that I finished my classical education just as it was time to commence it. However, even my early education has not been without some good effects; it has given me, if no more, at least a relish for knowledge, which I trust will never be satiated while I am on this side the grave.

Be assured of my esteem and friendship.

GEORGE W. BURNET.'

'Edenton, North-Carolina, March 10th, 1798.

My dear Friend,

That I should meet with a return of affection from one of your warmth and generosity of feeling, I had no reason to doubt. There is so close a connection between great talents and tender sensibility, that from your possessing the former, I was confident you must possess the latter also. His happiness is confined within a narrow compass who can bring himself to believe, that friendship is merely a name invented by men to further the accomplishment of interested designs. Such a man cuts himself off from one of the greatest sources of enjoyment with which our Creator hath blessed us. The exercise of our social affections is always delightful; but how exquisitely so is a pure and disinterested affection — an affection founded on

respect, built up and completed by an accordance of sentiments, of dispositions and pursuits ! What music so soothing as *the voice of a sympathising friend*, amidst the pains and misfortunes of a miserable world ? Who like a friend can cheer us in the dark hour of adversity, or brighten the sunshine of prosperity ? And here let me add, that religion, by spreading a serenity over all our powers, renders us more tremulously sensible to these amiable emotions ; while by regulating our faculties, and preserving them in a due proportion and subordination, it keeps the mind in a fit tone for vigorous and useful exercise.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. Smith, and the faculty, for honoring me with an office of which I feel myself unworthy. Be assured, that is no small inducement with me to return, that I shall enjoy the company and conversation of such warm and animated friends as Hobart and Mercer. As it is my wish, too, to review the Greek and Latin Classics, I shall accept of the offer made me. The faculty are perfectly acquainted with the circumstances under which I am placed. I shall therefore expect some indulgence beyond a teacher that is in perfect health.

Remember me to Mercer, and with every wish for your happiness,

I am yours affectionately,

FREDERICK BEASLEY.'

To the somewhat romantic picture of friendship contained in this last letter, it gives both truth and tenderness to learn, that amid the sorrows of after-life, such a friend he found in the individual here addressed. More than once

did Bishop Hobart fly, on the wings of friendship, to comfort and console one, who with a peculiar sensitiveness of nature has been called to experience his full share certainly, both of the sorrows of life and the ingratitude of the world.

The last letter, except to his family, that appears of a date previous to the period at which this narrative must close, is the following, from Mr. Hobart to his friend Mercer, in answer, as it would seem, to one of more than ordinary affection. From another pen the following might be classed as among the extravagances of boyish romantic feeling; but knowing, as his biographer has had good reason to know, the overflowing and generous ardor of the heart that dictated it, he does not fear to insert it as the picture of a noble spirit that overleaped all bounds in the warmth of its virtuous affections.

'Pottsgrove, May 15th, 1798.

I cannot express to you, my dear Mercer, the pleasure I received from your letter. It spoke a language that touched my heart, and excited all its tenderest affections. Friendship when sincere, it is said, burns with a steady flame: its joys are even and tranquil, but there certainly are moments when kindred spirits swell their joys into rapture. In a moment of this kind, my dear Mercer, you poured forth your tender expressions. My soul united with yours, and though at the distance of many miles, I pressed you to my bosom.

My much loved friend, I feel an affection at my heart too big for utterance. The tender and amiable disposition of heart that first attracted me to you, has appeared more worthy of my love the more I know of it; and when I found it united with the powers of genius, and firm and noble principles, admiration and respect were joined to affection. If therefore my heart has fixed on you with fond attachment,—if I have delighted in your society, and sought every means in my power to make you happy, the impulse was natural, the exertion involuntary. But, my dear Mercer, I gave no counsel that was not repaid with rich increase, — I gave no consolation that was not poured back a hundred-fold into my own bosom. I owe to your goodness, to your prudent counsel, to your sympathy, your tender and assiduous attentions, all that I can ever owe to the most ardent and faithful of friends, and I trust that neither the chances nor duties of life will prevent many happy meetings between us. But I have become familiar with separation. My dearest friends have been torn from me for life, and these mournful events, under the counsels of religion, have moderated the violence of my feelings. I now more fully realize, I trust, the duty of resignation to God in all the events, and under all the circumstances of life, teaching me to submit with holy confidence to all his dispensations, and directing my affections to that glorious state where my soul shall be satisfied with the fruition of God, and where I shall be reunited to those I have here loved. But perhaps this composure is only vain confidence, and any severe or unexpected trial would awaken, as hitherto, sorrow and repining.

I already begin to regret that scene of retirement and

study I enjoyed at Princeton, where, in the society of a few select friends, the vain desires of the world were shut out, and improving intercourse enlivened our spirits. But I check these emotions as inconsistent with my duty, and destructive of my peace, and resolve to endeavor, at least, to be contented with any situation in which I may be placed, while the review of past scenes of happiness will ever be the subject of my most soothing and pleasing thoughts.

College, I suppose, is again settled. May you experience in it both happiness and improvement. Few are more indebted to nature than yourself, and the assiduous cultivation of your powers, (to which, indeed, you are so strongly disposed,) is the only way to repay the debt. I am daily more sensible to the advantages of your situation, and regret that my health and spirits would not permit me to enjoy them longer. Something more, I now find, is necessary to improvement than retirement and leisure, or even a strong sense of the value of knowledge. There must be occasional contrasts with others to show us our defects, and to sharpen our diligence — there must be literary conversation to unbend the mind without dissipating its vigor — there must be scientific meetings to compel us to investigate useful subjects, and extend our knowledge of them. All these you have at Princeton in greater perfection than any where else I know of; and, were it not impracticable, I should even now resolve to spend there two or three years more, unfettered by an office, the duties and cares of which, while there, absorbed my time and bowed down my spirits. I am therefore desirous, my dear Mercer, that you should remain there as long as with propriety you can. Do not suffer tem-

porary inconveniences, or even permanent ones, to make you dissatisfied. We always think we shall do better in some other situation than the one we are in. The disadvantages of a present situation are always felt, while those of another are either unthought of, or but imperfectly realized. I have often found this the case, at least I know with myself.

College scenes and engagements, our pleasant walks, our cheerful meetings, often come over me with great force, and occupy my thoughts, so that I find it necessary, in order to preserve contentment, to magnify as much as possible my present or future advantages. I wish much to pay you a visit, but know not when it will be practicable. I shall expect with eager desire to see you at Frankfort. In your society I shall experience a joy I have not felt since I left Princeton.

The first Sunday in June is fixed on for my ordination. Whatever concerns me I know will excite your affectionate interest, and you shall therefore hear of all; and be assured, my dear Mercer, that I am no less anxious for your welfare and happiness. I am as well as I had probably any reason to expect, though not as well as I could wish; and in proportion as I can settle my mind to perfect reliance on the divine will, I am happy. With you, my dear Mercer, I am persuaded that this alone is the source of real happiness.

Your affectionate,

J. H. HOBART.'

In this confidence of the perpetuity of virtuous friendship, young Hobart speaks the genuine feelings of the better nature within us — it is a noble faith, and among the relics of

primeval innocence : *that* which in our attachments is 'of the earth, earthy,' perishes with all perishable things ; but the pure affections of the soul are a part of its essence, and cannot but endure so long as *it* endures. Wisely placed, therefore, and duly cherished, they form bonds which death cannot sever, and become sources of enjoyment fitted to take their place, with reverence be it spoken, among those which flow from God's right hand.

That Scripture does not expressly teach this, is no argument against it ; it is sufficient that it does not oppose it, for Scripture itself was not given to teach us *that* which the finger of God had already written on the heart.

CHAPTER VIII.

Graduate Society—Themes—Favorite Studies—Talents as a Public Speaker—Devotion to the Ministry—Ordination.

Thus gifted and conscientious, it is an interesting question on what studies Mr. H.'s mind was principally bent during his second collegiate residence. His official duties in college, though occasionally, it seems, both laborious and absorbing, left him, in general, sufficient

leisure for the pursuit not only of professional but general learning, and also, though sparingly, for his favorite relaxation, the academic contest of college debate.

The society of which he now became a member was known as 'The Graduate Society of Nassau Hall,' being confined to residents within its walls who had taken their first degree. The subjects here discussed were naturally of a higher order than those heretofore alluded to, and handled with an ability proportioned to the riper years of the disputants. What they were in the case of others can only be conjectured; but of young Hobart, *fifty-five* theses that remain sufficiently prove the current of his mind and thoughts, and open up to those who take an interest in the speculation, the native bent of his genius.

Judging from these, than which there can be no better test, all his natural tendencies seem to have been to practical results: knowledge with him was for action, and action was for influence, and influence was for public good. What the Greeks meant by the term *πολιτικός*, (when used in a good sense,) will to the scholar convey the most adequate notion of this temper of mind.

Of this character Aristotle gives the picture. His ends were all without him — connected

with the welfare of the state, the tribe, the public, or the community to which he belonged, in comparison of whose interests he felt himself but as a unit, and others but as instruments. In prosecuting these ends he was all energy and movement, bold, talented and persevering. Prompt in debate, courteous in reply, unbroken by defeat, offending none, gratifying many, influencing all: these were the traits that fitted him for acquiring influence in *counsel*, while in *action* all were willing to follow one who never deserted his friends, or receded from his purposes, whose sagacity foresaw all difficulties, and who had either prudence to avoid them, or resolution to overcome them.

Now to this ancient portrait young Hobart had many resembling traits, in talent, courage, and perseverance. With such a mind, knowledge, it is evident, is but a means: all knowledge, therefore, that could not show its relationship to the duties of life, met with but little respect at the hands of this youthful leader, and certainly occupied but small share of his voluntary attention. He speaks, indeed, in his letters, of the value he set on the mathematical studies to which his duties as tutor compelled him; but it was evidently the language of a conscientious spirit forcing itself

upon an uncongenial task. Such studies unquestionably took but little hold upon his mind, and left still less impression. Like a vigorous sapling, it sprang back, when let go from this forced bend, to the form and direction which nature had given it, and that was to the moral and prudential questions of life and practice. Physical science, for the same reason with the mathematics, had little attractions for him ; it lay, as he thought, beyond the pale of man's chief interest and daily business.

The question, 'What is ?' was ever therefore with him a much lower one than 'What ought to be ?' The former, as he argued, might make a man *knowing* ; the latter made him *wise* ; prudent and skilful in governing both himself and others ; and looking upon that as the great business of life, he chose for himself, and in after-life recommended to others, the studies which discipline the faculties, in preference to those which only heap up materials. In short, his idea of the educated man was much like the Stoic notion of the happy one ; the perfection of both lay rather in the course than the acquisition ; just as to run the race of duty with a firm, prudent, and benevolent mind, *that* was the height of happiness ; so to discipline the faculties to such a prompt, vigorous, and sagacious exercise, as to be at

all times ready to grapple with the practical questions of life, *this* was the perfection of education.

Under this strong natural bent, it was not every study that would *tell*; even his classical reading left much less impression on his mind than might have been expected from his long attention to those models of taste, both as student and teacher: his thoughts never became cast in their mould; and finding, too, his own pleasure in active duty, he underrated perhaps their value, as a storehouse of innocent, quiet enjoyment, to those whom nature has unfitted for the bustling engagements of life. The reputation of high scholarship was, consequently, neither claimed nor perhaps courted by him—a circumstance that unquestionably reveals itself in his style of writing, which, like his manner in speaking, was too full of ardor and movement to be esteemed perfectly classical or graceful. But, if this were a defect, it is one that belongs naturally to a strong and full mind. His style, therefore, is energetic in spite of much diffuseness, and clear in spite of much carelessness. The impression it leaves is that of a strong current; though it cannot be denied that its power would have been greater had it partaken more of that concentration and precision, both of thought and

language, which may be termed the stamp of scholarship, and which is rarely found apart from familiarity with the classical models of antiquity, and a sincere admiration of them. If it be argued that strength and justness of thought are independent of such nicety, we can only reply with the oft-repeated analogy, that though it be the vigor of the bow which sends the arrow to the mark, it is the point and polish of the dart which fits it to penetrate.

But if, under this long list of exclusions, it be asked what he did value among his academic studies, it may be answered, in the words of the statesman of old—those which might teach a man how to make a little state a great one. To train his own mind to wise choices, and to practise it in the vigorous pursuit of what he deemed public good, was with him more than a substitute for book learning. His theses and dissertations all give evidence of this: they are either solutions of vexed moral questions, or an examination into points of practical policy. Among the latter are several on the prospects of our national Confederation, which, with a patriotism less questionable than its sagacity, he contends to be superior, by its compound and nicely-balanced structure, to all those causes which brought ruin upon the simpler democracies of ancient times. In

moral questions he goes indeed to the root of the matter, venturing on 'the nature and origin of evil,' and evinces no contemptible power for a young logician, in wielding the great argument of final causes.

Within the walls where the great Edwards had taught and dogmatized, it would not have become a pupil to be wanting either in the hardihood to attempt, or in the ingenuity to explain, in words at least, the mysteries of our moral nature. It may not be uninteresting to see how our young metaphysician grapples with this problem. The following paper, from the bundle of theses, may be taken as a specimen. It appears to have been either an outline of a written discourse, or else notes to aid him in the discussion of the subject. It is as follows :

*Natural Evil not inconsistent with the Perfections
of God.*

1. Because the sum of good in the universe is greater than the sum of evil.
2. Because the natural evil that exists is overruled to wise and good purposes—the punishment of the morally guilty, and the trial and perfection of virtue.
3. Because the apparent inequalities in the distribution of good and evil in this life will be adjusted in a future state, where those who have suffered most here will be rewarded in a proportionably greater degree.

4. Because the virtue, and, consequently, the happiness of man will be greater from having been the subject of trial than it would otherwise have been, it being a clear and strong dictate of reason, that the trial of created virtue is necessary to its perfection.

Obj. An omnipotent God would have produced all this happiness without any of this evil.

Ans. Was it necessary for him to do so in order to preserve his perfections?

1. If those who suffer in this life will be proportionably rewarded in the life to come; if natural evil is made to perfect, and thus to increase the happiness of virtue, what reflection is there remaining on the attributes of God? Are they not more clearly illustrated and established by thus bringing good out of evil.

2. 'There is an absurdity in the objection. The happiness we are speaking of is the reward of that virtue only which has been tried; and, therefore, to suppose that it could be annexed to any other virtue, (if there be any other virtue in a created being,) is a contradiction in terms.

3. 'The omnipotence of God is to be understood in subordination to his own eternal reason; and, as far as we know, he is not pleased to consider any thing as virtue in his intelligent creatures which is not, or has not been the subject of trial; and this supposition, though it does not make evil necessary, makes it possible.

Obj. It may be said that the angels are not capable of sinning; and that the blessed, in a future state, will be placed beyond the possibility of sinning.

Ans. We do not know this. Some of the angels did sin; while the happiness and indefectible virtue of the

blessed is the reward of that virtue which has been the subject of trial, and not the original constitution of their being.

All which considered, we may conclude *natural* evil is not inconsistent, &c.

But further — MORAL *evil not inconsistent with the perfections of God.*

1. Because man is under no necessary impulse to sin, but in so doing acts freely.

2. Because the moral perfections of God are strongly illustrated by the exercise of mercy and goodness in the redemption of the virtuous, and of his justice and holiness in the punishment of the vicious.

Obj. The omniscience of God foreseeing these actions of man as a free agent, with infinite certainty makes them fixed and unavoidable.

Ans. There is a contradiction in the terms of the objection. The actions are supposed to be free, and yet are they asserted to be fixed and unavoidable. The error lies in not considering that the actions are supposed to exist before they are foreseen, or else that they are not actions; and they are foreseen, not as fixed necessary actions, but as free actions.

Illus. A man commits a crime; another standing by sees him commit it; but his seeing him has no effect on the action. So is it with the omniscience of God.

3. To say that the Deity foresaw that man would freely sin, and therefore (even in appearance) to impute sin to him (i. e. the Deity) as its author, because he did not prevent him from sinning, is a contradiction in terms. If man freely sinned, God could not, without destroying his free agency, prevent his sinning; and if man freely sinned, reason cannot impute any blame to God.

The question should be first asked, Does man freely sin? If he does, guilt lies at his door only. But it may be said, God foresaw man would sin, and might have prevented it, and not having done it, his goodness becomes chargeable; but the answer is, If man freely sin, there can possibly be no imputation on God. Why God created man imperfect, is a question human reason cannot answer; but if he has created him for the enjoyment of happiness, and put this happiness within his choice, and if he forfeits it by his own free act, there can be no imputation on the goodness of God.

The questions, Why God has created man imperfect and liable to err, and, Whether the existence of moral and physical evil can be reconciled with the perfections of God, are different questions.

Obj. God could have conferred the same degree of happiness on man in a future state, without exposing him to natural evil in this.

Ans. This is contrary to reason, which dictates that suffering virtue will receive a greater reward than virtue which has never been tried—never suffered.

As the most that can be offered on the subject is hypothesis; to the supposition that Omnipotence could have made man happy without exposing him to suffering, I will oppose the supposition, equally plausible, that God will confer greater happiness on man, in consideration of his suffering, than he would otherwise have done.

On the whole, though reason cannot resolve why God has created man, or made the world in its present state, in preference to any other; yet in the state of man, or the world, he sees nothing inconsistent with the perfections of God.

Hence we may conclude the existence of neither natural nor moral evil can be shown, &c.

But the origin of evil in the nature of man, is a question, which however disciplining to the intellect, is barren to the conscience, and was not likely long to enchain a mind set upon moral and operative truth. He seems, therefore, soon to have dropped the discussion. In relation to this inexplicable mystery, the simple language of Taylor finally contented him. 'Adam turned his back on the sun and dwelt in the dark and the shadow.' So that instead of troubling himself with the barren controversy of its *origin*, he seems to have henceforth fixed his thoughts on the practical question of its *remedy*, and dismissing the evil of human nature, in the gross, to have contented himself with looking into and laboring against his own.

Of the usefulness of such discussions, especially by the young, there will in general be but one opinion, and that against it. Nothing can at first sight appear more foreign, either to the practical duties of life, or the humble spirit of the Christian, than these subtle questions, which Milton, evidently with a view to their condemnation, puts into the mouth of fallen angels.

‘ Others apart sat on a hill retired
In thoughts more elevate ; and reason’d high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate—
Fix’d fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute—
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
—— Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy.’

But is there not, we would ask, some reason to doubt the justice of such condemnation ? To the charge of metaphysical studies being destructive of Christian humility, we may oppose the opinion of one who had sounded the depths of both. ‘ The profoundest metaphysician,’ says Robert Hall, ‘ will, in my opinion, (*cæteris paribus*,) be always the humblest Christian.’ And to the latter charge we would reply, that as a matter of fact, the most governing minds in every age have come forth from this peculiar training of the intellect. Such were Plato and Aristotle in philosophy ; Milton and Dante in poetry ; Burke in the senate ; and, to speak of our own day, Robert Hall in the pulpit.

The recent biography of this last-named worthy has brought this fact strikingly before us. By him, and his chosen friend Mackintosh, whole days of academic leisure were thus wasted, as most would term it, on the banks of the Scottish Dee, in vain endeavors to sound these unfathomable depths. Yet what was the result ? They emerged from

this wilderness of subtleties, not, as the arguers against such studies would conclude, metaphysical dreamers, or speculative infidels ; but stern, eloquent, and logical reasoners ; firm and heart-felt believers ; with a depth of thought, a richness of illustration, and a precision of language, which belong to those only who are inured to the habits of strict mental analysis. To the same point, we may add, what Cicero acknowledges of himself, that his power came — ‘non ex Rhetorum officinis, sed ex spatiis academix ;’ ‘not from the workshops of art, but from the schools of philosophy.’

But of moral studies, as opposed to physical, the triumphant defence was long since given, by one who was himself a striking example of their influence. ‘The knowledge of external nature,’ says Johnson, ‘is not the great or frequent business of the human mind. Whether we provide for action or conversation,—whether we wish to be useful or pleasing, the first requisite is the religious and moral knowledge of right and wrong. Prudence and justice are virtues and excellences of all times, and all places. We are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance.’

In our bustling republic, the study of metaphysics is naturally enough regarded with but

little favor : it passes for a barren region which bears no fruit, and deserves no cultivation ; yet the laborer's toil, we should remember, may be rewarded by gold from the depths below, as well as by the fruits upon the surface ; and when we see eminently practical talent educed by such studies, there is, unquestionably, some reason to doubt the correctness of first and popular impressions.

How this result takes place we cannot tell ; and yet perhaps it is not without its analogy in external nature. Metaphysics is the science of principles. As then we put seed into the ground, and there come up plants ; thus we sow in the mind principles, in order that there may come up wisdom ; for that alone is to be esteemed wisdom which has grown up and been nurtured in the mind itself ; transplanted knowledge being in comparison of it, but like rootless branches, which fade away so soon as memory ceases to water them ; or at any rate, like the stunted products of repeated removal, taking no deep root, and sending forth no vigorous branches.

Such unquestionably must be the conclusion of the biographer of Bishop Hobart, since never has our country brought forth a more practical efficient mind within the sphere in which he moved, and seldom has the youthful

mind been more turned to metaphysical speculation. But to return to our narrative.

The scene of these discussions, as already mentioned, was the Graduate Society of Princeton, an arena filled at that time with no ordinary proportion of talented young men, most of whose names have been already given.

At such meetings, when the members chanced to alight on knotty questions, or to be arranged under well-matched leaders, a protracted discussion ensued, and the contest seems often to have been maintained through several successive adjournments before a decision could be arrived at. Such exercises could not be without their inspiring influence on a mind already by nature prompt and sagacious; and Mr. Hobart's subsequent talents as a debater, in which he was excelled by few, may fairly be traced to this early discipline of his powers.

The only difficulty under which, as a speaker, he then labored, arose from his keen sensibility, which in this intellectual gladiatorship, like a sharp handled weapon, sometimes pierced both ways, wounding both him who gave, and him who received the thrust. As a debater, this was doubtless a great fault, since it dropped the shield from his own breast, and showed where he was vulnerable. As a man,

however, it rather added love to admiration of talent, to find the heart, in a good cause, sometimes turning traitor to the head. This ardor of feeling, though years moderated, no length of time could wholly subdue ; and through life it continued to break forth in all the trying scenes of joy or sorrow, with a power overwhelming alike to his own feelings and those of others. On such occasions he was, in truth, the ‘child again,’ and tears were his native language. This, while it gave deep eloquence to his own effusions of feeling, rendered him also peculiarly sensitive to the same power in others. Of this, an instance occurs to memory in after-life. Being present in court as witness, to give testimony to the character of a young clergyman, the late Mr. Thomas Addis Emmet rose to speak ; it was the first time the Bishop had heard him ; and the very exordium of the orator overpowered him. It was the picture of what the Christian clergyman *should* be : this, clothed in all that rich imagery, and uttered in those deep and impassioned tones, which marked the eloquence of Mr. Emmet, quite unmanned him. His head sunk on his hands, and so continued for some minutes after the speaker had closed ; he then came up to the present writer with streaming eyes, saying, ‘ I know not how you

have felt, but, for myself, I have not been able to hold up my head since he began.' Such sensibility makes eloquent; it dictates instinctively what art can only teach rhetorically. 'His feelings,' says a friend, speaking of his recollections of his appearance in this Society, 'were apt to kindle quickly on every subject; but this only gave eloquence to his effusions.'

In the situation he then was, this sensitiveness could hardly pass without trial, in a seminary where the prevailing religious opinions were opposed to those which he conscientiously believed, and which, as a candidate for the ministry, he felt himself called upon unhesitatingly to maintain.

'There was a class of us,' says Dr. Caldwell, the friend above quoted, 'who were studying theology at that time, under Dr. Smith. Mr. Hobart was one of our number, and known to be decidedly Episcopal in his views. He was Arminian in his sentiments, the rest of us were Calvinistic. He was always strenuous in every thing which he deemed a peculiarity of opinion distinguishing him from others, whenever circumstances evolved it into view; but we were in the habits of the utmost forbearance and good feeling. If at any moment a spark appeared, struck out in discussion in

consequence of peculiarity of church or doctrine, it seemed instantly understood that it was to be permitted to drop and disappear.'

The language of Professor Maclean, on this point, is more pleasing, and probably, at the same time, more exact. 'He was alike distinguished,' says he, 'for his attachment to the Episcopal cause, and for his liberality toward Christians of all other denominations. He now gave evidence of that zeal for his Church, and ability to defend her interests, which so remarkably characterized the whole of his ministerial life.'

But, whatever were his attachments, the principle on which he proceeded in his studies evinces a sound and liberal cast of mind. 'I mean not to leave any author,' says he, 'until I have made myself master of him and his subject. My sphere of reading may be contracted by this method, but it will certainly not be made less improving.'

His course of reading, too, was the opposite of that which would be chosen by a sectarian: it displays alike independence and liberality, or, to speak more justly, a mind imbued with the true spirit of the Gospel, and seeking only to know the truth.

'Dr. Smith,' says he, in one of his letters, 'who is very attentive to me, seems to wish

that I should begin to study his system of divinity ; but I am entirely opposed to studying any system whatever, till I understand more of that sacred volume from which all their conclusions, if just, must be drawn. When the fountain is open, why have recourse to the streams which it supplies ? Scripture seems too generally studied in order to support preconceived opinions, and perhaps this is the reason why so many doctrines inconsistent with it are maintained. When the study of the Bible is gone through, systems may then be advantageously taken up.*

It is due to Bishop White, who was his spiritual adviser, to state, that in this course he was supported by his authority. ‘ Dr. White,’ he adds, ‘ earnestly recommended it to me to study the Bible, to form my opinions.’ Such too is the language of the Church whose ministry he sought ; it teaches no system of divinity, and imposes nothing but the Holy Scriptures ; ‘ so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith.’*

Christianity, so studied, cannot eventuate in a sectarian system. Where truth is the only

* Article VI.—Of the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for salvation.

object sought, there can hardly be bigotry in opinion, least of all in matters of religion, since he who thus studies the word of God can hardly fail of imbibing its spirit also, and gaining grace as well as knowledge.

Thus much, at least, therefore, must be conceded to the memory of Bishop Hobart, even by those who most differed from him. His religious convictions were drawn from the study of the Bible : he openly and studiously rejected all human authority in forming them ; and if he arrived at the doctrines which the Church teaches, it was still the Scriptures, and not the Church, which taught them to him.

But not only in their source were his opinions scriptural, they were equally so in the spirit with which he maintained them. Even when most bitterly condemned, he never confounded men with principles. He would go to the death for the maintenance of what he believed to be truth ; but then he claimed for himself no higher sincerity than what he allowed his adversaries, nor ever transferred to their persons the hostility he often felt toward their opinions. He had no respect, it is true, for what the world calls 'liberality' in religion. No wonder, then, that with the world he was sometimes esteemed a bigot ; it is the fate of all men who make truth their only aim ; it was

the condemnation of the early Christians, that they would not symbolize with the Heathen around them ; and it has never ceased, in what is now termed the Christian world, to be the condemnation of such as, in the same apostolic spirit, hold to what they esteem scriptural truth, without compromise, and without wavering.

But if this be bigotry, what, we may ask, is sound Christianity? If to examine fairly, without regard to human authority, and to hold firmly, without respect to the world's opinion, what the well-instructed and conscientious mind arrives at in the study of the Bible, not denying to others an equal right to independent judgment, and an equal share of conscientious scrutiny, — if this be bigotry, then, indeed, was Bishop Hobart a bigot ; but so too must be esteemed the Peters and Pauls, the Luthers and Calvins, of every age. But, on the contrary, if such be the necessary course of every candid, brave, and true spirit, then was Bishop Hobart but another bright sample of what all Christians should be.

Independence of character marked his early as it did his latter years ; he stood up for what he thought truth and right, no matter who opposed them, or what obstacles stood in the way. Some sparkles of this spirit seem to

have been elicited even with his revered friend and pastor, Bishop White, in reference to the terms of his ordination.

By the Canons of the Church, as they then stood, no candidate could be ordained without what in ecclesiastical language is termed 'a title.' A call was consequently procured for him from one of the neighboring country churches; but when he understood that it implied a permanent connection, he promptly declined it, on the conscientious as well as prudential ground that the congregation and he were mutually ignorant of each other.

His request for ordination, with the freedom to look for a situation, was considered irregular; but, in answer, the idea was thrown out that he might be admitted to orders on the plea of his situation as tutor. This he still more promptly rejected, on the score of its insincerity, 'not choosing,' as he observes, 'from many considerations, to remain longer in it.'

The following letters close the correspondence between him and the Bishop, which was drawn forth by these unexpected impediments.

'Princeton, December 8th, 1797.

Dear Sir,

I had intended writing to you even before the receipt of your letter. On referring to the canon you mention, I find my first wishes cannot be gratified. I

supposed I might be permitted to preach where I received invitations, holding myself responsible to the proper authority for any infringement of ecclesiastical discipline; at the same time, as there was no congregation within my knowledge to which I felt a particular predilection, I thought I might be indulged in looking around me, and fixing, with the approbation of my superiors in the Church, where I supposed I could be most useful and most happy. The canon, however, is contrary to this idea; and with respectful deference to the opinion of those who framed it, I must be permitted to say that, in my opinion it imposes a great hardship on candidates for the ministry—a hardship which, I believe, is not felt in any other Church—obliging them to settle before they can be acquainted fully with a congregation, or the congregation with their qualifications. The plan I have suggested will, I think, comply in spirit with the requisitions of the canon; but I really cannot think of engaging permanently with any congregation before I know their character and situation, and before they can have that confidence in me which a discharge of my duty among them, for some time at least, can alone inspire.

I would wish you to believe that the obedience I shall ever choose to render to the authority of the Church will be the dictate of duty and affection; and that my own opinion shall ever be relinquished to that of my ecclesiastical superiors, when it is not attended with the entire sacrifice of my own judgment or happiness. The kindness and care you have always shown me will make me peculiarly anxious to secure your approbation.

I remain, dear Sir,

Very affectionately, &c., yours,

JOHN H. HOBART.'

The proposition contained in this letter he subsequently modified to a twelvemonth's engagement, and deferring orders until the fall; which, after some discussion, was finally approved of.

Now in this matter Mr. Hobart unquestionably was right, and the canon wrong. The requirement of 'a title' for ordination, had been borrowed from the English Church, in which it is no doubt a wise provision against the admission of superfluous numbers into a profession at all times fully stocked; but in a country like ours, where the demand for ministers so far outruns the supply, the precaution was alike needless and annoying. It was wisely, therefore, modified in his case, and by subsequent legislation entirely removed, substituting instead, a right of direction on the part of the ordaining Bishop over those ordained during the period of their deaconship.

The following is in answer to the proposition as modified :

' Philadelphia, February 8th, 1798.

My dear Sir,

Although the arrival of your letter at a period the most distressing to myself and family,* must have accounted to you for not receiving an early answer, yet

* The death of Mr. White.

I certainly have let the matter rest much longer than I intended. As it is now stated I see no difficulty, and the matter appears in the same light to my brethren. I have only to add, that nothing on my part shall be wanting to your satisfaction; and with my prayers, that by Divine grace you may be directed for the best,

I remain yours very affectionately,

W. WHITE.'

'Princeton, February 16, 1798.

Dear Sir,

I am happy to find by your letter that my plan is approved of by yourself and the clergy. With your approbation, then, I will prepare against the stated time of ordination on Trinity Sunday, and commence my parochial duties as soon after as shall be deemed proper. My thanks are due to Dr. Smith, for the interest he discovers in this matter. Your uniform and kind attention to my welfare fully assures me, that on this occasion every thing will be contributed in your power to my satisfaction.

With sentiments of respect and duty,

I am, dear Sir, yours affectionately,

J. H. HOBART.'

An incidental letter to his mother about this time, while it shows her justifiable anxiety for his temporal interests, exhibits on his part that disregard of money, when balanced against duty or kindness, which equally marked him in poverty and wealth. 'My dear mother,' says he, 'does not seem properly to under-

stand what I wrote to Dr. White, I have no intention of remaining *permanently* with any congregation that will not afford me a decent competence. I only meant that I would not insist on this *at first*, as a condition, before they knew my abilities, or whether I would please them. I considered also, that most of the Episcopal congregations are in such a deranged state, as to need the sedulous exertions of a settled minister to put them in the way of affording a maintenance. I would always wish my income from a congregation to rest on the opinion they had of my abilities and exertions. Thus explained, I think you can have no objection to my sentiments.'

As appears by the following letter to his sister, his early and favorite plan of a settlement in Virginia had been for some time given up. This scheme seems to have been suggested to him by the attachment formed during his short visit to the family of his friend Mercer; but that which romantic feelings dictated, the more abiding affections of his heart soon led him to abandon.

'Princeton, February 2d, 1798.

If my dear sister had opposed even my strongest wishes, the affectionate manner in which her reasons were addressed to me, would have operated strongly on

my feelings ; but when my plans for life were far from being settled, reasons thus drawn from the highest motives of usefulness and duty, and urged by one whose tender regard for my happiness I have so often felt, could not fail of determining my mind.

In the hope then of uniting usefulness with that retirement so valuable to me, both as it subserves study and cherishes virtuous feeling, and with the strong desire of giving happiness to my friends, and deriving it myself from all these sources, I have concluded to direct my views solely to the congregations near the city, and will inform Dr. White, that if they be willing I will engage with them for a year. If this determination affords you pleasure, I wish you to believe, that one of its chief enjoyments to me will be the opportunities it will afford of an interchange of affection with those to whom nature and duty so strongly attach me.

In my plans worldly objects have had but little place. If this be an error, it is one which my feelings make natural, and I believe invincible. A life in the country can be, I believe, more happy than one in the city ; and though I do not say that no considerations will induce me to submit to the latter, yet they must be those of high commanding duty. In an unreserved and affectionate intercourse with my near connections, mutually bestowing and receiving all kind and tender offices, and more especially reclining with confidence on some sincere and feeling friend ; — such are the enjoyments which I desire. Scenes of bliss, like the last, have for a moment delighted me, and passed away ; it is only in a higher state of being that I can hope for the permanent possession of them.

There is no duty more in unison with my feelings,

nor of stronger obligation, than that which regards the tender parent to whose solicitous and unwearied care I owe so much. All the comfort I can afford her will not compensate her kindness and goodness to me. In her faithful discharge of duty to us all, there is, I trust, in reserve for her much higher happiness than she can receive here.

I shall not be able to make the necessary preparation for taking orders until the fall; but as I mean to leave college in the spring, I shall have an opportunity of pursuing, in part at least, your plan for me of relaxation and exercise. I often anticipate with lively feelings, the society of my friends, of which of late years, I have had so little. * * * * * Your last son has a peculiar claim from being named after me, but I will not promise to love him better than the rest. May my dear sister derive all that happiness from her children, of which her affection and care make her truly deserving!

Thus prays your affectionate brother,

J. H. HOBART.'

The letter of Mrs. Smith to which this is an answer, unfortunately is not preserved, but the good sense and piety displayed in all her letters demand some short notice of the writer. Rebecca (Hobart) Smith was at this time his only surviving sister, being his senior by at least thirteen years. The misfortunes of her youth, having lost both husband and child before the twenty-fifth year of her age, had early matured her Christian character, and

made her a wise as well as tender counsellor, to her more ardent, if not more sensitive brother.

In her second marriage, with Mr. Smith, worldly prosperity opened upon her, but it seems only to have widened and deepened the stream of Christian feeling. Many benevolent labors are recorded of her ; among others, the origin of the Philadelphia Society for the relief of destitute widows. Her mind, though calm and practical, was not destitute either, we may conclude, of enthusiasm ; since her poetic effusions were widely circulated, and highly praised in the literary circle in which she moved : while the eulogium passed upon her after death, by Dr. Benjamin Rush—that she had ‘a mind elevated at once by nature, education, and religion,’ will be sufficient warrant that she must have been a woman far above the ordinary mark of female talent and attainment.

Of the fitness of Mr. Hobart for the sacred office upon which he was now about to enter, little doubt can be entertained by those who have traced him through the course of his early years. In all academic studies, wherever placed, he had stood pre-eminent ; but these he little valued, except for their bearing upon spiritual character. ‘The improvement of

the heart,' said he, 'should be the end of all our acquirements, and to no purpose are we made wiser, if we are not also made better men.' His theological attainments too, however inferior to his own demands upon himself, were such as called forth the high approbation of his examiners. 'His signal proficiency,' observes Bishop White, referring with his characteristic modesty to this period, 'although the fruit of his own talent and industry, yet I have ever since pleased myself with the hope that he may have derived some little aid from what it occurred to me to suggest to him.'

But, whatever may be thought of his intellectual proficiency, in that preparation of heart which he most sought, and without which all other is valueless, there can be no question; and his own doubts, so often and so feelingly expressed, only strengthen the conviction, that he was in truth inwardly called and fitted by the Spirit of God, for that career of Gospel usefulness he was destined to run, but yet trembled to enter upon. 'It pleases God,' says he, writing to a dear friend, 'and O how grateful should I be to him for it, to continue to me a deep impression of the necessity of repentance; to give me daily convictions of the danger of living in this world, without being prepared through the merits of a Saviour

to leave it ; and also constantly to direct my view to another in which my happiness or misery depends upon the use of my time and talents here.' 'Far am I,' says he again, 'from thinking that I am qualified for the ministry, either in mental or spiritual acquirements. I want every requisite ; but, by the goodness of God, I may at last obtain those qualifications which will fit me for entering on it.' 'Sacred and awful will be my duties ; the grace of God can alone enable me to execute them. O pray with me, that in my entrance on this important office, I may have a single eye to his glory, and the salvation of immortal souls—pray that he would subdue within me every desire of honor, emolument, or human praise ; and that I may serve him with sincerity and truth.' 'I am afraid,' he again adds, 'that my views are not sufficiently pure for the ministry—that I have not sufficiently in view the ends for which it was instituted ; but I hope that God, for CHRIST's sake, will bless me, and that he will make me, in his hands the humble instrument of turning many to righteousness.'

With such preparedness he came forward, and on Sunday, the 3d of June, 1798, was admitted to Deacons' Orders, in Christ Church, Philadelphia, by the same hands which had

there received him at the font of baptism. Many circumstances concurred to make it a deeply affecting scene. It was the church of his father's age and his own youth ; it was the church in which he had been baptized and confirmed, and where all his early pious affections had been nurtured : he was surrounded, therefore, by all those visible associations which on such occasions press most home upon the heart. It was in the presence, too, of an only parent, an only brother, and an only surviving sister. To have looked at that moment upon his widowed mother, must indeed have touched his inmost soul, for that day was to her the fulfilment of all her dearest hopes, the completion of a thousand cares, and the reward of as many anxious tears ; and if a blessing may be won from Heaven by the aspirations of human affections, we may confidently believe it was drawn down on that day for such a son by the trembling, grateful prayers of an aged Christian mother. His voice from the pulpit, when soon after called upon to ascend it, must have indeed sounded in her ears like ' glad tidings of great joy ; ' and whatever may have been the effect of his discourse upon others, she at least must have realized at that moment the truth conveyed in the words

of his text, 'Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.' *

But the mention of the pulpit reminds the biographer that the 'early years' of Bishop Hobart are ended, and his 'professional' one begun, and consequently that his own pleasing labors must now draw to a close.

Such, then, is the picture exhibited of the head and heart of John Henry Hobart, during the years, so often idly spent, of boyhood and youth. It is one, the truth of which cannot be doubted, since it is given in letters too familiar to be insincere, and too numerous to leave any thing untold which has a bearing upon character : such letters, the product of an age equally unplanning and unsuspecting, when there are no ends to gain, and no part to play, may, therefore, be safely taken as the genuine picture of native feelings, and the character they give received as the true character. Nor do those letters stand alone : they are more than borne out by the undeviating testimony of all who knew him. Respect for his talents, love for his virtues, and admiration for his whole

* Prov. iii. 17.

character, seem to have been the universal sentiment inspired by his course, at a time when there could have been no motive for concealment or exaggeration, either from fear or flattery.

And what is the picture thus presented ? It is that of a youth, fatherless from his infancy, and removed, in general, from the watchful eye of his mother ; left, therefore, to himself and his own guidance during those years when passion is strongest and resolution weakest, and yet pursuing with undeviating steadiness the path of virtue and honorable diligence ; no hour wasted, and no task forgotten, and yet no claim rejected of sympathy or active kindness. Take the estimate of his character from his teachers, and he was the faultless student ; take it from his companions, and he was the true-hearted friend, guiding the ignorant, counselling the thoughtless, aiding the distressed, and improving all, making his friendship to be esteemed by them an honor, and by their parents nothing short of ‘ a blessing.’ Thus from his boyhood did his life run on, a limpid stream and a straight-forward course : with no rocks of passion, no eddies of indolence, no turbid pools of vice, to deform, delay, or darken it. A cheerful spirit was to him as flowers upon its borders, and a

clear conscience like bright pebbles at the bottom.

If it be now asked what thus raised him above the ordinary follies and vices of his age? what strengthened him 'to scorn delight, and love laborious days?' how it happened that a high-spirited, talented, and ardent youth was never led into skepticism by pride of intellect, nor by conscious talents seduced into indolence, nor by ardent passion betrayed into vice? we can only point for answer to that tone of heartfelt piety which marked him from his tenderest years, and which as he advanced became in all things his ever-present and overruling motive—'his boon companion, and his strong breast-plate.' This was the secret of his excellence and his strength, enabling him, not only to walk himself uprightly in slippery paths, but to lend a helping hand to others. It was indeed a piety of the true sort, rooted in the understanding, nourished in the affections, and witnessed by the fruits it brought forth in the life,—a piety not of words but of deeds, making his heart tender and his thoughts kind—his feelings ardent in every good cause, and his hand active in every deed of benevolence,—a piety too, not of proud human philosophy, but of deep Christian humility, conscious of its own frailties, and laying

hold with fervent hope on a Christian's only confidence—the atonement and mediation of a Redeemer.

Such is the picture of Bishop Hobart in early youth ; and childish and uninteresting as it may be in many of its details, the Editor would yet fain hope that it will not be wholly without use ; that with his contemporaries it may confirm the love and admiration of those who knew him, and correct the misapprehensions of many who knew him not ; and to the rising generation in the Church, that it may furnish an attractive and persuasive model of whatever in youthful character is ‘pure, lovely, and of good report.’





